

## INSIDE TODAY WORLD NEWS

### MOSSAD HIT



Palestinian Hamas militants participate a rally for the memory of Hamas commander Mahmoud al-Mabhouh, seen in the portrait, in town of Beit Lahiya, northern Gaza Strip, Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2010. Israel's foreign minister said Wednesday there was no reason to assume the Mossad assassinated Mahmoud al-Mabhouh in Dubai, even as suspicions mounted that the country's vaunted spy agency made the hit using the identities of Israelis with European passports.

Read more on Page A8

## SPORTS NEWS

### TIGER TALKS



This Nov. 10, 2009, file photo shows Tiger Woods during a news conference before the Australian Masters golf tournament at Kingston Heath Golf Club, in Melbourne, Australia. Tiger Woods will speak to the

Read more on Page A12



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# Obama says stimulus bill saved economy

WASHINGTON—President Barack Obama hailed Wednesday's one-year-old economic stimulus law as an accomplishment that staved off another Great Depression and kept up to 2 million people on the job. Still, with millions still out of work and losing patience, Obama acknowledged that to them, "It doesn't yet feel like much of a recovery."

Marking the anniversary of the \$787 billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Obama aimed his message at people skeptical about the expensive relief measure and Republican



White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs briefs reporters at the White House in Washington, Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2010.

Associated Press

lawmakers who voted against it and continue to hammer him about it.

To the public, Obama explained, as he has many times before, that the stimulus plan was composed of tax cuts for most Americans along with help for state governments, extended social service benefits and huge investments in energy, education and infrastructure.

"One year later, it is largely thanks to the recovery act that a second depression is no longer a possibility," Obama said.

Continued on Next Page

## Haiti judge frees 8 of 10 American missionaries

FRANK BAJAK  
Associated Press Writer

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — Eight American missionaries were freed from a Haitian jail Wednesday, nearly three weeks after being charged with child kidnapping for trying to take a group of children out of the quake-stricken country.

The eight — looking bedraggled and sweat-soaked — walked out of the Haitian jail escorted by US diplomats just after dusk. They waited until they were safely inside a white van before flashing smiles

and giving a thumbs up to reporters.

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American missionaries arrested on charges of child kidnapping, Corinna Lankford, of Meridian, Idaho, right, Steve McMullin, 56, second from right, and Paul Thompson, 43, third from right, both from Twin Falls, Idaho, leave a Haitian Jail as an unidentified US Embassy official walks behind them at left in Port-au-Prince, Wednesday Feb. 17, 2010. Eight of the ten U.S. missionaries arrested were released on Feb. 17, nearly three weeks after they were caught trying to take a group of children out of the quake stricken country.

Associated Press



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White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs briefs reporters at the White House in Washington, Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2010.

## STIMULUS

### Continued from Front Page

To his Republican critics, who say the bill was a costly, debt-financed blunder that has not delivered on the promise of job creation, Obama challenged them to take up the case with people who have stayed employed or have found help solely because he and the Democratic-run Congress acted.

Obama even delighted in recounting a section of his State of the Union address last month in which he talked of

the tax cuts from the stimulus plan and watched Republican lawmakers fail to applaud the idea.

"They were all kind of squirming in their seats ... It was interesting to watch," Obama said.

And Obama made sure to commend himself and his own team for taking action.

The United States has lost an astounding 8.4 million jobs since this recession began in December 2007.

Obama said the stimulus plan is on target to create or save 1.5

million more jobs, bringing up the estimated total to 3.5 million.

But he sought to remind people that the goal of law was never to restore every job.

The government can build confidence and demand and rescue people in hard times during a severe economic slide, Obama said, but it will always be businesses of the private sector that ultimately generate jobs and a recovery.

Obama made repeated references to how well, in his view, his government has done with the stimulus.

"There has never been a program of this scale, moved at this speed, that has been enacted as effectively and as transparently as the recovery act," Obama added. Referring to Vice President Joe Biden and the other top aides, Obama said, "This team has done an outstanding job."

Biden, who has led the stimulus implementation, took his own swipe at critics. "They're unwilling to step up," he said. "Well not us." □

## U.S. files new charges against arms dealer suspect

DEVLIN BARRETT

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. prosecutors filed new charges Wednesday in their global pursuit of a suspected arms dealer, hoping to convince reluctant officials in Thailand to extradite him over objections from Russia.

An updated indictment charges that Viktor Bout, once known as the "Merchant of Death," and his former business associate, Richard Chichakli, conspired to violate United Nations sanctions aimed at stopping bloody fighting in Africa.

The new charges appear aimed at helping U.S. authorities overcome a Thai court's objections to extraditing Bout, a wealthy Russian businessman whose case has become a diplomatic tug of war between the U.S. and Russia since his arrest in Bangkok in 2008.

A Thai judge had turned down a U.S. extradition request for Bout, citing concerns that Bout's arrest was based on American evidence that he was aiding a South American militant organization that is not considered a terrorist group by Thailand.

Russia has fought U.S. attempts to take Bout into custody. Chichakli is a Syrian-born American last reported to be living in Moscow.

Bout is a former Soviet air officer who was dubbed the "Merchant of Death" because of his 1990s-era notoriety for running a fleet of aging Soviet-era cargo planes to conflict-ridden hotspots in Africa. A high-ranking minister at Britain's Foreign Office first used the nickname to single out Bout for his arms role in Africa. □



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# Police: Imitation pot as bad as the real thing

**SARAH D. WIRE**  
Associated Press Writer  
**JEFFERSON CITY, Missouri (AP)** — There may be nothing like the real thing, but some industrious marijuana users have seized on an obscure but easily accessible substance that mimics the drug's effects on the brain — creating a popular trade in legal dope that has stymied law enforcement authorities. The users are buying a product known as K2 — or "Spice," "Genie" and "Zohai" — that is commonly sold in headshops as incense. Produced in China and Korea, the mixture of herbs and spices is sprayed with a synthetic compound chemically similar to THC, the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana. Users roll it up in joints or inhale it from pipes, just like the real thing. Though banned in most of Europe, K2's key ingredients are not regulated in the United States — a gap that has prompted lawmakers in Missouri and Kansas to consider new legislation. "This isn't Jerry Garcia's marijuana," said state Rep. Jeff Roorda, a Democrat from the eastern Missouri town of Barnhart. "They've used chemicals to avoid creating something that's already illegal." Authorities in Johnson County, Kansas, discovered ex-convicts on probation smoking K2, and said it is spreading to high school students. "This has become extremely popular," said Linda Weber, owner of The Vise smoke shop in a St. Louis suburb, who said she only sells to adults. She said she sells about 60 packages a week, with suppliers calling her weekly to pitch new brands. She

said she's keeping an eye on what state lawmakers decide, though, because "I definitely don't want to be selling it if it comes out that it's harmful." K2 costs between \$20 and \$50 for three grams — similar to the street price of marijuana — but with the key advantages of being legal and undetectable in drug tests. The key ingredients are believed to be the unintended result of scientific research on marijuana's effects. Dr. John Huffman, a Clemson University organic chemistry professor, was researching the effects of cannabinoids on the brain when his work resulted in a 1995 paper that contained the method and ingredients used to make the compound. That recipe found its way to marijuana users, who replicated Huffman's work and began spraying it onto dried flowers, herbs and tobacco. "People who use it are idiots," said Huffman, referring to K2 smokers. A proposed bill in Missouri would make possession a felony punishable by up to seven years in prison — identical to punishments given to users of real marijuana. A similar bill in Kansas would make possession a misdemeanor, with up to a year in jail and a \$2,500 fine, also the same as marijuana convictions. The products are sold widely, but authorities in other states contacted by The Associated Press, including Pennsylvania, California and Michigan, said they haven't heard of their use as a drug. Police in Missouri and Kansas said they've become aware of K2 in recent weeks. In the rural southern Missouri city of

West Plains, K2 is sold in a head shop just blocks from the high school. A botched attempt by teens to steal K2 from the shop brought the substance to the attention of police. "A 10-year-old child could walk into a head shop and buy it," said West Plains Detective Shawn Rhoads. "It's not a tobacco, it's not regulated by anything. It would be like sending my 10-year-old son into Wal-Mart to buy potpourri." Although it is legal, the military has banned possession of K2. The federal Drug Enforcement Administration has classified it a "drug or chemical of concern." Conner Moore, 20, who is taking a semester off from college, said he and his friends started smoking K2 after reading online news articles and postings about the substance. He compares the high to smoking medical marijuana. The high, he says, is shorter. "We just got on forums and looked it up and saw what other people said about it," he said. "Obviously if it comes out being bad, I'll obviously stop using it," Moore said. "There's really no sites out there that say what is in K2." There is no data on the drug's toxicity or how long it stays in the body. In mice, it can lead to a lower body temperature, partial paralysis and the temporary inability to feel pain, according to the DEA. One of the few studies of the compound's use was performed by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, a Portugal-based agency of the European Union, in November 2009. The study found the amount of synthetic compound varies widely between brands, and



This Feb. 15, 2010, photo shows a package of K2 which contains herbs and spices sprayed with a synthetic compound chemically similar to THC, the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana. State lawmakers in Missouri and Kansas have introduced bills which would create penalties for K2 possession similar to those for marijuana.

Associated Press

that despite being widely available, it isn't clear how many Europeans use it. Allen St. Pierre, executive director of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, said K2 isn't much discussed within

marijuana culture. "If government is genuinely concerned about controlling cannabis-related products, there is really only one thing that seems to have an effect: a tax stamp," St. Pierre said. □

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# GOP sees possible upside in health care summit



In this Feb. 9, 2010, file photo President Barack Obama talks to reporters following his meeting with Congressional Democrats and Republicans, calling for bipartisanship to fix the economy in the White House press briefing room in Washington. Obama challenged Republicans to participate in a Feb. 25 one-of-a-kind televised summit with Democrats to come up with health care legislation.

By ERICA WERNER  
WASHINGTON

Congressional Republicans see a chance for political gain in President Barack Obama's televised health care summit next week, even though the

*Associated Press*

president will be running the show.

Obama and the Democrats are certain to highlight a crucial element of their health care plan — extending coverage to more than 30 million Americans

— at the one-of-a-kind event. By comparison, a Republican plan would only help 3 million more. But during a time of ballooning deficits, the GOP figures reining in rising medical costs — not coverage — could resonate with voters in an election year.

The Democratic health overhaul plan is estimated at some \$1 trillion over 10 years, and Republicans will contrast their financial approach with that of the Democrats. So even on Obama's turf, the GOP thinks it can score a few political points.

"I think what we have to do is keep it on the policy and really continue to describe that we have listened to the American people, and anyone listening to the American people would say scrap this bill and begin again, and let's begin again by focusing on lowering costs," Rep. Dave Camp of Michigan, who will be attending the summit as the top Republican

on the House Ways and Means Committee, said Tuesday.

Republicans know they go into the half-day event Feb. 25 with built-in disadvantages. Obama dominated when he debated House Republicans at their retreat in Baltimore last month, and the White House would like to recreate that dynamic, capitalizing on Obama's speaking skills.

The president has already said he'll moderate the forum, and the location and staging at the Blair House guest residence are of the White House's choosing, giving Democrats home-court advantage. But Republicans say they have a different advantage: Polls show Americans side with them on the substance. All they have to do is remind viewers that's the case, and they could chalk up something like a win that could make the going even tougher for the Democrats.

In a New York Times/CBS poll released this month, 56 percent said they preferred "a smaller government providing fewer services" to 34 percent in favor of "a bigger government providing more services." Some 27 percent named jobs as the most important issue confronting the nation while 25 percent said the economy. Thirteen percent said health care, fewer than the 16 percent who said "other."

Republicans say all that argues in favor of their approach: taking smaller steps toward reform, not a comprehensive remake like the Democrats prefer. They'll continue to argue that Democrats should scrap their existing bills and start over.

"Americans don't want another 2,700-page bill that raises taxes and slashes Medicare for our seniors," said Don Stewart, spokesman for Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky.

With the summit more than a week away and lawmakers out of town for the Presidents Day recess, Republicans are in the early stages of planning their strategy for the event, which Democrats hope will jump-start legislation stalled since they lost a Massachusetts Senate seat and their ability to overcome Republican delaying tactics.

House Minority Leader John Boehner of Ohio and McConnell, his Senate

counterpart, will attend the summit along with other top Republicans. Boehner and McConnell also get to invite four lawmakers each but have not said who they will be. That decision in itself will send a message about their approach and help determine the tone of the session.

"I think the president will lay out his ideas and I would expect that Republicans will and others will lay out their solutions," White House press secretary Robert Gibbs told reporters.

One potential hitch for Republicans is that there is not a single GOP plan.

In the House, one Republican plan would cover some 3 million and lower premiums by as much as 8 percent for individuals and 10 percent for small businesses — expect to hear the latter figure mentioned frequently at the summit. But a number of lawmakers have their own plans, and in the Senate no single Republican plan emerged, though individual senators put forward proposals, including some with significant similarities to the Democratic bills.

Obama has pledged to post the Democrats' plan online before the summit; he's hoping Democrats in the House and Senate can reconcile differences between their approaches before then. Republicans have no plans to go along with Obama's request that they, too, post a comprehensive proposal online, but they don't view that as a problem.

Keith Hennessey, who served as senior White House economic adviser to President George W. Bush, offered Republicans some advice in a posting on his blog this week. He wrote that Republicans should offer a range of significant policy changes but not feel obligated to have a single unified approach. Instead, they should "hammer home that this should have been a legislative debate and process among multiple options, rather than a take-it-or-leave-it, or option A vs. option B exercise."

Hennessey's final words of advice: "When in doubt, shift the camera's focus to your disagreements with congressional Democrats, who will be a far easier opponent in a public snowball fight than the president." □



Toyota Motor Corp. President Akio Toyoda reacts during a press conference in Tokyo, Japan, Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2010

*Associated Press*

## AP source: U.S. govt to investigate Toyota Corolla

By KEN THOMAS

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The Transportation Department plans to open a formal investigation into the 2009-2010 Toyota Corolla over potential problems with the car's power steering, a department official said Wednesday.

The preliminary investigation is expected to be opened

on Thursday and involves an estimated 500,000 vehicles. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the department had not yet notified Toyota of the probe.

Toyota Motor Corp. said at a news conference in Japan earlier Wednesday that it was looking into complaints of power steering problems with the Corolla and was considering a recall as one option. Toyota said there have been fewer than 100 complaints.

In the U.S., the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has received about 150 complaints from drivers about the issue. The complaints are small compared to the number of vehicles involved: The department said the investigation involves about 363,000 vehicles from the 2009 model year and about 136,000 vehicles from the 2010 model year.

In the Corolla complaints, drivers have said they felt they were losing control over the car's steering, particularly at highway speeds. □



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# Man tells police he tossed baby off bridge

**SAMANTHA HENRY**  
Associated Press Writer

WOODBRIDGE, New Jersey (AP) — A man who snatched his infant daughter from the arms of her maternal grandmother while the child's mother was in court getting a restraining order against him told police he threw the baby off a bridge and into a frigid New Jersey river, prompting a massive search beneath a busy parkway.

Search teams, including boats, dogs and helicopters, scoured the area beneath the Garden State Parkway's Driscoll Bridge in Central New Jersey on Wednesday for any signs of 3-month-old Zara Malani-lin Abdur, who was abducted Tuesday.

Authorities suspended the search after dark and planned to resume at daybreak Thursday.

Acting New Jersey Attorney General Paula Dow called it "an example of a horrific case of domestic violence."

Authorities say the girl's father, 21-year-old Shamsiddin Abdur-Raheem, allegedly forced his way into the grandmother's apartment Tuesday afternoon, striking her in the face, choking her, and forcibly taking the baby, wrapped in a blanket.

The 60-year-old grandmother, who police declined to identify, chased after Abdur-Raheem and was struck when she tried to stop him by throwing herself in the path of his van.

She was treated at a local hospital and released.

Abdur-Raheem was arrested four hours after the abduction

and allegedly confessed to police that he had tossed the child from the bridge before driving to consult with his Imam, who then drove him to the home of a relative who called police.

Abdur-Raheem faces charges of kidnapping, attempted murder, aggravated assault and child endangerment when he is arraigned Thursday morning in Superior Court.

It was not immediately clear

if he has retained a lawyer. He was being held at the Essex County Jail on \$700,000 bail.

The child's mother, Venetta Benjamin, who has sole custody of the infant, was in a Newark courtroom seeking a restraining order against Abdur-Raheem at the time of the alleged abduction.

Her lawyer, Mitchell Liebowitz, said the baby was snatched before the order was served. □



**Menlo Park firemen look at the scene of a small plane that crashed into a house in East Palo Alto, Calif., Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2010.**

*Associated Press*

**BROOKE DONALD**  
**SUDHIN THANAWALA,**

Associated Press Writer

EAST PALO ALTO, California (AP) — A twin-engine plane carrying three employees of electric car maker Tesla Motors struck a set of power lines after takeoff Wednesday and crashed into a fog-shrouded residential neighborhood, raining fiery debris over homes, sending residents running for safety and killing everyone aboard.

But the crash somehow caused no injuries or deaths on the ground despite a wing slamming into a home where a day care center operated. The seven people inside the house, including an infant, all escaped moments before the home went up in flames.

Menlo Park Fire Chief Harold Schapelhouman said the Cessna 310 either struck a 100-foot (30-meter) electrical tower or clipped its power transmission lines and broke apart, dropping debris throughout the working-class Silicon Valley neighborhood. It



**East Orange, N.J., Police Chief Ron Borgo listens, left, as New Jersey acting Attorney General Paula T. Dow answers a question Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2010, in Woodbridge, N.J., about the search for 3-month-old Zara Malani-lin Abdur, after Shamsiddin Abdur-Raheem, her father, told authorities he had thrown his daughter off a bridge.**

*Associated Press*

## 3 Tesla workers die when plane hits home

was not immediately clear if the dense fog played a role in the crash.

The city of Palo Alto said most of the city and surrounding area — about 28,000 customers — had no electricity for most of the day because of the crash.

A spokeswoman for Palo Alto-based Facebook Inc. said its offices were without power but the outage was not affecting the Web site. Hewlett-Packard Co.'s corporate headquarters also were dark, and employees were asked to find other places to work Wednesday, a spokeswoman said.

The crash rattled Tesla Motors, one of only a few companies producing and selling purely electric cars. The identities of the employees were not released. The plane was owned by Doug Bourn of Santa Clara, identified by a Tesla spokesman as a senior electrical engineer at the company.

"Tesla is a small, tightly knit company, and this is a tragic day for us," Tesla CEO Elon Musk said in a statement.

The Cessna crashed Wednesday morning shortly after takeoff from the Palo Alto Airport and was bound for Hawthorne Municipal Airport in Southern California, according to the Federal Aviation Administration. The crash site was close to Tesla's headquarters in San Carlos.

The occupants of the homes have been accounted for, although authorities can't be completely sure of the fatality count until crews begin clearing the wreckage, Schapelhouman said.

"Either by luck or the skill of the pilot, the plane hit the street and not the homes on either side," he added. "That saved people in this community."

The crash comes at a difficult time for Tesla, which employs 515 people worldwide and just three weeks ago disclosed plans to hold an initial public offering of stock. □





Charisa Coulter of Boise, Idaho, one of the 10 U.S. missionaries arrested on charges of child kidnapping, is taken into a police car to a field hospital to receive treatment in Port-au-Prince, Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2010. A Haitian judge said some of the 10 U.S. missionaries would be released on Feb. 17, nearly three weeks after they were caught trying to take a group of children out of the quake-stricken country.

Associated Press

## HAITI JUDGE

Continued from Front Page

Hours earlier, judge Bernard Saint-Vil told The Associated Press that eight of the 10 missionaries were free to leave without bail or other conditions after parents testified they voluntarily handed their children over to the missionaries.

"The parents of the kids made statements proving that they can be released," he said, adding that still wants to question the group's leader and her nanny.

Kimberly Flowers at the U.S. Embassy would not confirm that the Americans were leaving on a U.S. government chartered plane, citing privacy law. She said that as U.S. citizens, they were entitled to evacuation flights.

The group will be flying out of Haiti Wednesday night, said defense attorney Aviol Fleurant. Their destination was not immediately known. Reporters were denied access

to the Port-au-Prince airport tarmac where the released detainees were taken.

The missionaries, most from two Baptist churches in Idaho, are accused of trying to take 33 Haitian children to the Dominican Republic on Jan. 29 without proper documents. Their detentions came just as aid officials were urging a halt to short-cut adoptions in the wake of the earthquake.

The missionaries say they were on a humanitarian mission to rescue child quake victims by taking them to a hastily prepared orphanage in the Dominican Republic and have denied accusations of trafficking.

Group leader Laura Silsby originally said they were taking only orphaned and abandoned children, but reporters found that several of the children were handed over to the group by their parents, who said the hoped the Baptists would give them a better life.

Saint-Vil said he still wants

to question Silsby and nanny Charisa Coulter about their visit to Haiti in December before the earthquake, but he asked for Coulter to be hospitalized because of her diabetes. Earlier Wednesday, Coulter of Boise, Idaho, briefly received treatment but was then taken back to jail.

"We are very pleased that Paul, Silas, Drew, and Steve have been released by the Haitian court," said Caleb Stegall, a Kansas district attorney who has been helping some of the defendants. "Their families are relieved and anxious to have them safely home, and we are turning all of our energies toward bringing them back as safely and quickly as possible,"

Gary Lissade, the attorney for American Jim Allen, said he expected the charges to be dropped against the eight.

Relatives in the U.S. received the news of the judge's decision cautiously.

"Until I know they're on a

plane on their way home, it's hard to react," said Drew Ham, assistant pastor of a Baptist church in Meridian.

Silsby's sister, Kim Barton, said learning that her sister could not leave Haiti was difficult. "At this point I don't have any comment. I don't know any more than you do," Barton said.

The group early had been embarrassed by revelations that a man who briefly served as their legal adviser and spokesman in the Dominican Republic is wanted on people-smuggling charges in the United States and El Salvador.

U.S. Marshals say they are hunting for Jorge Puella, who was already being pursued by authorities in the Dominican Republic on an Interpol warrant out of El Salvador, where police say he led a ring that lured young women and girls into prostitution. He also had an outstanding warrant for a U.S. parole violation. □



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PG-13	THE LOVELY BONES	daily: 5:30	8:30	NEW
	matinee:	2:30	late show: 11:30	
PG-13	LA VIRGEN NEGRA	daily: 6:45	9:00	NEW
	matinee:		late show: 11:15	
R	EDGE OF DARKNESS	daily: 6:00	8:30	
	matinee: 1:00	3:30	late show: 11:00	
PG	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS "THE SQUEAKQUEL"	daily: 4:00		
	matinee: 12:00	2:00	late show:	
PG	VALENTINE'S DAY	daily: 6:15	8:45	
	matinee: 12:30	3:15	late show: 11:30	
R	THE WOLFMAN	daily: 6:00	8:45	
	matinee: 12:15	3:00	late show: 11:30	
R	LEGION	daily: 4:45	7:15	
	matinee: 12:00	2:15	late show: 12:15	

### AT PASEO HERENCIA

R	FROM PARIS WITH LOVE	daily: 4:00	6:15	8:30	NEW
	matinee: 1:45		late show: 11:00		
PG-13	DEAR JOHN	daily: 6:15	8:45		
	matinee: 1:15	3:45	late show: 11:30		
PG	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS "THE SQUEAKQUEL"	daily: 4:15			
	matinee: 12:00	2:00	late show:		
PG	PERCY JACKSON & THE OLYMPIANS	daily: 5:30	8:15		
	matinee: 12:00	2:45	late show: 11:00		
PG-13	IT'S COMPLICATED	daily:	6:30	9:00	
	matinee:		late show: 11:30		
R	THE BOOK OF ELI	daily: 6:00	9:00		
	matinee: 12:15	3:00	late show: 11:45		
PG-13	AVATAR 3D	daily: 4:45	8:00		
	matinee: 1:30		late show: 11:15		



# Embattled Afghan Taliban rely on human shields

ALFRED de MONTESQUIOU  
RAHIM FAIEZ

Associated Press Writers

MARJAH, Afghanistan (AP) — Taliban fighters holding out in Marjah are increasingly using civilians as human shields, firing from compounds where U.S. and Afghan forces can clearly see women and children on rooftops or in windows, Afghan and U.S. troops said.

The intermingling of fighters and civilians also has been witnessed by Associated Press journalists. It is part of a Taliban effort to exploit strict NATO rules against endangering innocent lives to impede the allied advance through the town in Helmand province, 380 miles southwest of Kabul.

Two more NATO service members were killed in the Marjah operation Wednesday, the alliance said in a statement without identifying them by

nationality.

Their deaths brought to six NATO service members and one Afghan soldier who have been killed since the attack on Marjah, the hub of the Taliban's southern logistics and drug-smuggling network, began Saturday. About 40 insurgents have been killed, Helmand Gov. Gulab Mangal said. During Wednesday's fighting, Marines and Afghan troops "saw sustained but less frequent insurgent activity," mostly small-scale attacks, NATO said in a statement.

NATO spokesman Brig. Gen. Eric Tremblay told journalists in Brussels that most of the objectives have been achieved. "Perhaps the pocket in the western side of Marjah still gives freedom of movement to the Taliban, but that is the extent of their movement," he said.

This is the biggest offensive since the 2001 U.S.-led

invasion of Afghanistan, and a test of President Barack Obama's strategy for reversing the rise of the Taliban while protecting civilians.

As Marines and Afghan soldiers press their offensive, they have been forced to hold their fire because insurgents are shooting from inside or next to mud-walled compounds where civilians are present — and restraint slows their advance.

Brig. Gen. Mohiudin Ghor, the brigade commander of Afghan troops in Marjah, said in some cases women and children may have been ordered to stand on a roof or in a window of buildings where Taliban fighters are shooting. Ghor said troops have to decide between firing on insurgents among civilians, or advance much more slowly to keep women and children out of the crossfire.

"They are trying to get us to fire on them and kill the



civilians," Ghor said.

Journalists embedded with the Marines have seen such cases: a neighborhood is alive with children, then the next minute the streets are empty and gunshots ring out. As the troops advance, children reappear, peering and grinning through half-closed doors.

Rocket-propelled grenades have been fired from behind groups of civilians, who scamper away as the Marines point their weapons toward

the source of fire. Marines have come under fire in poppy fields as they are being tended by farmers.

"I myself saw lots of people that were shot, and they were ordinary people," said Afghan soldier Esmatullah, who did not give his rank and like many Afghans goes by one name. Taliban "were firing at us from people's homes. So in returning fire, people got shot," he said.

*Continued on Page 9*



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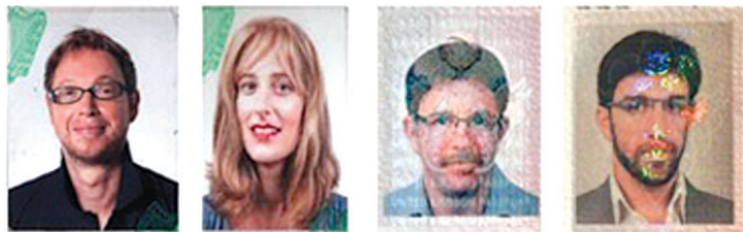


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# Israelis convinced: Mossad behind Dubai hit



This combination image made from undated photos released by the Dubai Ruler's Media Office on Monday, Feb. 15, 2010, which were claimed by Dubai's Police Chief to show eleven suspects wanted in connection with the killing of a Hamas commander, Mahmoud al-Mabhouh, in his Dubai hotel room last month. (From left to right, top row): Evan Dennings of Irish nationality, Gail Folliard of Irish nationality, James Leonard Clarke of British nationality, Jonathan Louis Graham of British nationality; (From left to right, middle row) Michael Bodenheimer of German nationality, Paul John Keeley of British nationality, Michael Lawrence Barney of British nationality; (From left to right, bottom row) Peter Elvinger of French nationality, Kevin Dameron of Irish nationality, Melvyn Adam Mildiner of British nationality, Stephen Daniel Hodes of British nationality.

Associated Press

**STEVEN GUTKIN**  
Associated Press Writer  
JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli security officials said Wednesday they were convinced the Mossad was behind the assassination of a Hamas commander in Dubai and harshly criticized the spy agency for allegedly stealing the identities of its own citizens to carry out the hit. Names released by Dubai matched seven people living in Israel, raising questions about why the agency would endanger its own people by using their passport data as cover for a secret death squad. At the same time, some Israeli experts said the Dubai evidence pointed to a setup to falsely blame Israel.

A vague comment from Israel's foreign minister, who neither confirmed nor denied Mossad's involvement, only added to the spy novel-like mystery surrounding the slaying of Mahmoud al-Mabhouh, who was found dead Jan. 20 at a luxury hotel near Dubai's international airport.

"Israel never responds, never

confirms and never denies," Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman said in Israel's first official comment on the affair, then added: "I don't know why we are assuming that Israel, or the Mossad, used those passports."

Some senior Israeli security officials not directly involved in the case were less circumspect, saying they were convinced it was a Mossad operation because of the motive — Israel says al-Mabhouh supplied Gaza's Hamas rulers with their most dangerous weapons — and the use of Israeli citizens' identities.

The officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of a government order not to discuss the case, characterized the operation as a significant Mossad bungle. If it develops into a full-blown security scandal, that could harm Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu politically.

Some compared the case to another Mossad embarrassment during Netanyahu's previous term as prime minister, the failed attempt to kill Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal in 1997. Two Mossad agents posing as Canadian tourists were captured after injecting Mashaal with poison, and Israel was forced to send an antidote that saved Mashaal's life. Today Mashaal is Hamas' supreme leader.

Still, there was praise for the Dubai operation from some analysts who noted the major difference between it and the Mashaal case is that the latter failed and the former achieved its goal — the assassination of a Hamas commander.

"Al-Mabhouh is dead and all the partners to the operation left Dubai safely," wrote analyst Ronen Bergman of the Yediot Ahronot newspaper. Critics slammed the Mossad, not for killing al-Mabhouh on foreign territory but for doing it sloppily and endangering Israeli citizens in the process. A front-page commentary in Israel's Haaretz daily by defense analyst Amir Oren called for the ouster of Mossad director Meir Dagan.

"What is needed now is a swift decision to terminate Dagan's contract and to appoint a new Mossad chief," he wrote. "There's no disease without a cure."

Dubai authorities released names, photos and passport numbers of 11 members of the alleged hit squad this week, saying all 11 carried European passports. But most of the identities appeared to have been stolen, and at least seven matched up with real people in Israel who claim they are victims of identity theft.

Among them is Melvyn Adam Mildiner, a dual Israeli-British citizen who said one of the numbers matched his own UK passport. He told The Associated Press he had never been to Dubai.

Others expressed shock that their names were used. Paul John Keeley, a 43-year-old father of three, told Haaretz he was worried "that someone will try to harm us." Stephen Hodes told Israel Radio: "I'm simply afraid. These are powerful forces."

The revelations by Dubai, which has no diplomatic relations with Israel, raised many questions: Could someone be trying to make it look like the Mossad carried out the hit? Might Israel have wanted to leave behind a fingerprint to enhance the Mossad's mystique? Did Israel underestimate Dubai's policing abilities? Why would Israel risk exposing 11 agents by allowing them to be filmed by Dubai surveillance cameras, even if they were disguised? Answers were not forthcoming, yet if Israeli involvement is confirmed, the al-Mabhouh killing is likely to be remembered as one of the more stunning hits in the Mossad's history of undercover operations.

The affair could have unwanted diplomatic repercussions for Israel. Britain's Foreign Office summoned Israeli Ambassador Ron Prossor for talks about the case Thursday.

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown promised an inquiry, saying: "The British passport is an important document that has got to be held with care." □

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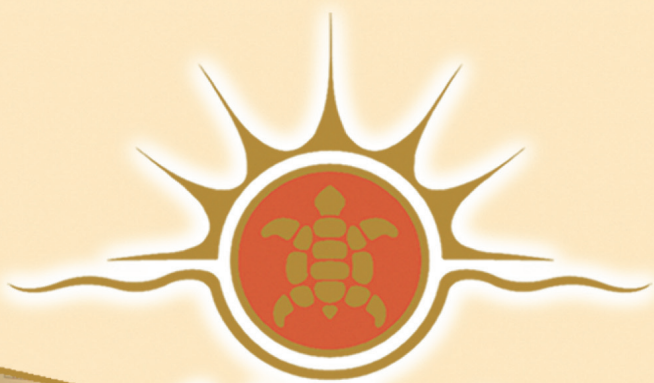
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### HUMAN SHIELDS

*Continued from Page 7*

NATO has confirmed 15 civilian deaths in the operation. Afghan rights groups say at least 19 have died.

Troops are forbidden to fire unless they identify a target displaying "hostile intent." Marines cannot shoot at fighting-age men walking out of a building used by snipers unless the men are carrying a weapon or have been seen dropping one.

Public outrage over civilian deaths last year prompted the top NATO commander, U.S. Gen. Stanley McChrystal, to tighten the rules of combat, including curbs on airstrikes if civilians are at risk.

Afghan civilian deaths soared to 2,412 last year — the highest number of any year of the war, according to the U.N. But deaths attributed to allied troops dropped nearly 30 percent after the new rules were imposed, according to a U.N. report.

On Wednesday, an Afghan soldier climbed to the roof of an abandoned shop and raised his country's green-and-red flag before provincial officials, hundreds of Marine and Afghan troops and a few civilians.

The market was calm during the ceremony and the Marines said they were in control of the neighborhood.

Signs of fighting were everywhere. The back of the building with the flag had been blown away. Shops were riddled with bullet holes. Grocery stores and fruit stalls stood open, hastily deserted by their owners. White metal fences marked off areas not cleared of bombs.

Afghan soldiers said they were guarding the shops to prevent looting.

A Marjah resident at the flag-raising said the area around the market has been devastated by the assault.

"The Taliban fired a few shots and then the troops came and bombed the area," said Abdul Rasheed, a bearded, middle-aged man. "People fled their homes in a desert without food and water. Children and women are living in very hard conditions."

Once the town of 80,000 people is secure, NATO plans to rush in civil administrators to revive schools, health clinics and electricity in hopes of winning public support to discourage the Taliban from returning.

About 1,100 police, including 900 members of a paramilitary force, were sent to Marjah and the surrounding area Wednesday, Afghan Interior Ministry spokesman Zemer Bashary said in a videoconference with journalists in Brussels.



An Afghan Army soldier salutes an Afghan flag hoisted on a building in a market in Marjah, Afghanistan, Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2010

*Associated Press*

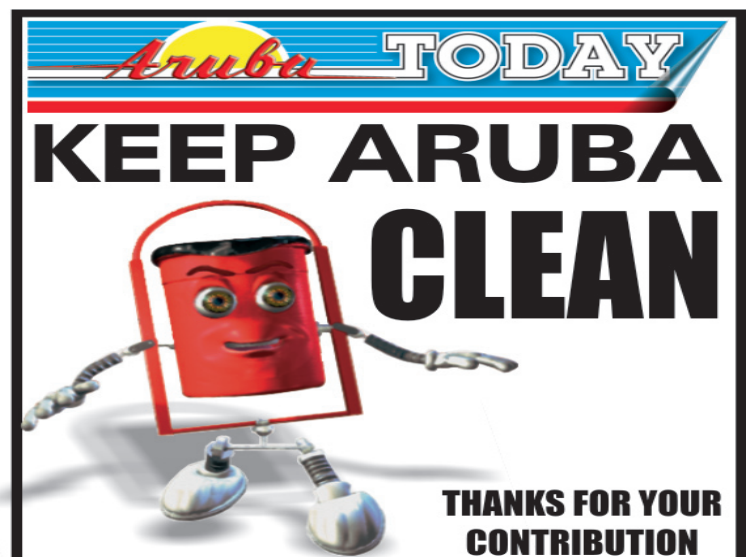
Mangal, the Helmand governor, said the neighborhoods will be turned over to Afghan police as they are secured.

"Life is returning to normal," he said. "You can see the people are busy in their daily lives. Some shops are still closed but once they arrest the enemy, hopefully, the shops will reopen too."

The town is probably safe enough now for a deputy district chief to move in and start setting up the government, said State Department official Frank Ruggiero.

He told reporters in Kabul

that one obstacle is that the buildings in Marjah, including Taliban planted bombs all inside the walls of the district over abandoned government center. □







**FILE - In this Oct. 26, 2009 file photo, Jon Gosselin leaves the Montgomery County courthouse in Norristown, Pa.**

(AP Photo/Matt Rourke, file)

# Jon Gosselin, TLC reach settlement in lawsuit

By NAFEESA SYEED,

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — TLC has settled a breach of contract lawsuit against reality TV star Jon Gosselin, the network said Wednesday.

TLC sued Gosselin in October, claiming he failed to meet his obligations as an exclusive employee of the network while appearing on rival networks' programs for pay and making unauthorized public disclosures about the show. Gosselin filed a countersuit claiming TLC violated Pennsylvania's child labor laws in filming "Jon & Kate Plus 8." The show followed Gosselin, his wife, Kate, and their eight children — twins and sextuplets — at their home in Wernersville, Pa. They became tabloid fixtures when their marriage dissolved, and the show ended last year.

TLC spokeswoman Laurie Goldberg said Wednesday that all terms of the settlement are confidential and the network will take steps to conclude litigation.

The original suit was filed in Montgomery County, Md., in October. It sought unspecified compensatory damages and demanded Gosselin return income gained as a result of his alleged

breaches of the agreement and refrain from future violations. In the countersuit, Gosselin sought more than \$5 million in damages.

Mark Jay Heller, Gosselin's attorney, said the settlement was filed Wednesday and Gosselin did not appear in court. He said Gosselin is hopeful that the network will move forward with the "best interests" of the family.

"Jon has expressed his desire to close the litigation chapter of 'Jon & Kate Plus 8,' he said. "Sometimes litigants that kiss and make up find their relationship is much better the second time around. As Jon's attorney, I truly hope this new adventure for TLC and the Gosselins is a much more joyful journey."

Heller did not disclose details of the agreement and would not say whether Gosselin would be allowed to appear again on the network. Asked whether the countersuit is still ongoing, he said: "All litigation has come to an end."

Goldberg, the TLC spokeswoman, said the whole Gosselin family remains under contract with the network.

"We have announced that we're working on a show with Kate," she said. "That's all that's in the works at this time." □

# Alexander McQueen hanged himself in London home

By JILL LAWLESS,

Associated Press Writer

LONDON — A bereaved Alexander McQueen left a note, then hanged himself in his apartment on the eve of his mother's funeral, a coroner's inquest said Wednesday, giving the cause of the fashion designer's death as asphyxiation and hanging.

The inquest has yet to formally deliver a ruling of suicide, but police said there were no suspicious circumstances.

Coroner's official Lynda Martindill told the inquest at Westminster Coroner's Court that the body of 40-year-old McQueen was found in an armoire at his London apartment on Thursday. In the dispassionate language of the inquest, she referred to him as "a single man, a fashion designer."

Days before he died, McQueen had left several messages on the social networking site Twitter revealing his grief at his mother's recent death.

Police detective inspector Paul Armstrong told the inquest there were no suspicious circumstances. He gave the note found at the scene to coroner Paul Knapman but did not disclose its contents.

After a five-minute hearing, the coroner adjourned the inquest until April 28. Full details of the autopsy also will be available in a few months.

McQueen's family, who are now free to hold the designer's funeral, issued a statement through their lawyers appealing

to the media to respect their privacy following their "grievous double loss."

They have not released details of the funeral.

In Britain, inquests are held whenever someone dies violently or in unexplained circumstances. McQueen's death has cast a shadow over London Fashion Week, which opens on Friday. A spokeswoman said the event would feature a tribute to the designer, whose attention-grabbing designs helped re-energize British fashion after a fallow period following the punk explosion in the 1970s.

"There will be something simple and tasteful," she said. "The time for memorials will be later in the year."

She spoke on condition of anonymity because organizers are waiting for McQueen's family to approve the tribute. Known for his dramatic statement pieces and impeccable tailoring, McQueen dressed celebrities from Cameron Diaz to Lady Gaga and influenced a generation of designers.

He was named British Designer of the Year four times and awarded the title of CBE — Commander of the Order of the British Empire — by Queen Elizabeth II. Unlike many fashionistas, he came from a working-class background. The son of a cab driver, McQueen grew up on a public housing estate in London's East End, left school at 16 and entered the fashion world the old-fashioned way, as a teenage apprentice to a Saville Row tailor. He later

studied at Central St. Martin's art college in London and was discovered by fashion guru Isabella Blow, who bought his entire graduation collection. She became a friend and mentor; her suicide three years ago shook the designer, who wept openly at her funeral.

McQueen was a private man who avoided the limelight, but his Twitter postings show emotional turmoil after his mother's death on Feb. 2. McQueen had posted messages four days before his death about his "awful week," and said he had to "somehow pull myself together and finish."

His mother's funeral was held the day after McQueen died.

Friends also said he might have felt under pressure to outdo himself at the unveiling of his new collection in Paris next month. "I don't think success was easy for him," friend Plum Sykes wrote in the Sunday Telegraph this week. "He told me he was driven by his insecurities, and he believed that all successful people were."

McQueen became chief designer at the Givenchy house in 1996, but was best known for his own label, in which Gucci bought a majority stake in 2001. McQueen retained creative control, and became famous for his dramatic and often uncategorizable creations: sculptural cocktail dresses in psychedelic patterns; headwear made of trash; 10-inch (25 centimeter) heels shaped like lobster claws. □



**FILE - This Monday, June 2, 2003 file photo shows Alexander McQueen posing for photographers after winning the International Award at the 2003 Council of Fashion Design Awards held in New York. Fashion designer Alexander McQueen was found hanging in the wardrobe of his London apartment last week with a note left nearby, a British coroner's official told an inquest Wednesday Feb. 17, 2010. No details of the note were released by the coroner's office, which is charged with formally identifying the circumstances of the designer's death.**

(AP Photo / Stuart Ramson, File)





# Stocks climb on upbeat earnings, economic reports

By TIM PARADIS,  
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — A stream of good news has the stock market back on an upward path.

Encouraging corporate and economic reports Wednesday added to hopes that a recovery is taking hold even as big concerns remain about unemployment and bursting budgets in countries like Greece.

Deere & Co. and Whole Foods Market Inc. jumped after their profit reports topped expectations and the companies raised their forecasts. Improved reports on home construction and production at factories also helped pull the market higher. The Dow Jones industrial average rose 40 points a day after it jumped 170 following a stronger manufacturing figures. Treasury prices fell as demand for safe havens eased.

Investors could get more insight into the economy Thursday from Wal-Mart Stores Inc. and Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co., which are scheduled to report earnings. Stocks had fallen in recent weeks on overseas concerns, including Greece's debt crisis and moves by China to keep its economy from growing too fast. The concerns remain but traders have been able to turn attention to the domestic economy.

The Commerce Department said construction of homes and apartments rose to an annual rate of 591,000 in January, better than the 580,000 units forecast by economists polled by Thomson Reuters.

A collapse of the housing market helped push the economy into recession, but recent reports have suggested the market is stabilizing. Applications for building permits, a barometer of future activity, fell 4.9 percent. A

drop was expected after two months of big growth.

The Federal Reserve, meanwhile, said production at the nation's factories, mines and utilities rose 0.9 percent last month. It was the seventh straight month of growth and better than the 0.6 percent gain forecast by economists.

Investors also drew reassurance from a brighter assessment of the economy from the Fed. Minutes released from the central bank's last meeting suggest that policymakers remain cautious but that they expect stubborn unemployment rates will begin to fall next year.

Even with two days of gains, concerns remain. Ken Kamen, president of Mercadient Asset Management in Hamilton, N.J., said there is still an underlying sense of unease in the market despite the gains of the past two days.

"From day to day there's no one boogeyman or no one exciting thing," Kamen said. "People are getting neck strain spinning their head from side to side looking at all the different pieces of information."

According to preliminary calculations, the Dow rose 40.43, or 0.4 percent, to 10,309.24.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 4.64, or 0.4 percent, to 1,099.51, while the Nasdaq composite index rose 12.10, or 0.6 percent, to 2,226.29.

Bond prices fell, pushing yields higher. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note rose to 3.75 percent from 3.66 percent late Tuesday.

The dollar rose against most other major currencies. Gold prices fell.

Crude oil rose 32 cents to \$77.33 per barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

Randy Frederick, director of trading and derivatives at Charles Schwab, contends that with the big gains Tuesday the

market is back in balance after its slide over the past month. The S&P 500 index fell 9.2 percent from mid-January to the start of last week.

"I wouldn't be surprised to just see some sideways movement here and maybe small increases over the next week or two," he said.

Frederick said the level of the Chicago Board Options Exchange's Volatility Index, which is known as the market's fear gauge, shows a healthy caution in the market after the index got too low in January. An increase in the VIX signals that investors are prepared for swings in the market. □



**FILE** - In this Feb. 12, 2010 file photo, Fred Demarco with Guzman and Co. works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. The stock market extended its advance Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2010, after Deere & Co.'s earnings beat expectations and the government issued an upbeat housing report.

(AP Photo/Craig Ruttle, File)

## Federal deficit at \$430.69 billion through January

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER,  
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — The federal deficit through the first four months of the budget year is running at a record-breaking pace even though the deficit in January was slightly smaller than expected.

The massive tide of red ink reflects the continued fallout from a deep recession and a severe financial crisis. It highlights the formidable challenges President Barack Obama will face in trying to get the deficit down to more manageable levels.

The Treasury Department said Wednesday that the deficit for January totaled \$42.63 billion.

That left the total of red ink so far this budget year at \$430.69 billion, 8.8 percent higher than last year when the deficit soared to an unprecedented level of \$1.42 trillion.

Obama, in sending Congress a new budget plan on Feb. 1, projected that this year's deficit would hit \$1.56 trillion and would remain above \$1 trillion for three consecutive years. He forecast the 2011 deficit, for the budget year that begins next Oct. 1, would total \$1.27 trillion.

The administration on Wednesday marked the anniversary of the passage of the \$787 billion economic stimulus bill, maintaining that it has worked to stave off a second Great Depression while acknowledging that more must be done

to put people back to work.

While Republican critics have attacked the stimulus spending as ineffective, Obama said it had kept up to 2 million people on the job and the government needed to do even more to fight an unemployment rate that currently stands at 9.7 percent.

However, the administration contends that it will begin to tackle the deficit problem beginning in 2011. In his budget, he offered a down-payment on deficit reduction, a three-year freeze on discretionary government spending outside of defense and homeland security.

Obama on Thursday plans to announce creation of a deficit panel headed by Erskine Bowles, a former White House chief of staff in the Clinton administration, and former Sen. Alan Simpson, R-Wyo.

The commission will be charged with reporting back by the end of this year on what steps Congress and the administration should take to get the deficit down to a level of 3 percent of the overall economy, a point that economists believe is manageable. Last year's deficit equaled 9.9 percent of GDP, the highest point since World War II, and would climb to 10.6 percent of GDP this year.

The \$42.63 billion deficit for January was down from a \$63.46 billion deficit in January 2009 and was below the \$47 billion forecast of private economists. □



# SPORTS

## Aruba TODAY

### NBA Roundup

# Nets get 5th win, knock off Bobcats

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina (AP) — Courtney Lee scored 21 points and Devin Harris added 17 as the New Jersey Nets beat the Charlotte Bobcats 103-94 on Tuesday for only its fifth win of the season.

Brook Lopez added 16 points before fouling out for the energized Nets (5-48), who snapped an eight-game losing streak, improved to 2-27 on the road and moved ahead of the pace of the 1972-73 Philadelphia 76ers, who finished an NBA-worst 9-73. Gerald Wallace had 21 points and 10 rebounds and Boris Diaw had 19 points and 10 rebounds for the Bobcats, who allowed the NBA's worst-shooting and lowest-scoring team to shoot 52 percent.

At Oklahoma City, Kevin Durant had 25 points and 14 rebounds and rookie reserve James Harden added 17 points as Oklahoma City beat the new-look Dallas to stretch



New Jersey Nets' Courtney Lee (6) goes in to dunk as Charlotte Bobcats' Boris Diaw (32), of France, and Nazr Mohammed (13) look on in the first half of the Nets' 103-94 win in NBA basketball game in Charlotte, N.C., Tuesday, Feb. 16, 2010.

Associated Press

their winning streak to seven games.

Caron Butler scored 13 points after coming over in a weekend trade from Washington.

Dirk Nowitzki scored 24 points, Jason Terry had 14 points and Jason Kidd had 12 points for the Mavericks. Starting center Erick Dampier had 13 rebounds but headed to the locker room with 2:54 remaining with an open dislocation of the middle finger on his right hand.

Durant extended his streak of games with at least 25 points to 26, but he needed a driving layup with 26.6 seconds left to get there — after coach Scott Brooks had taken three of Oklahoma City's five starters out of the game.

**Heat 105, 76ers 78**

At Philadelphia, Dwyane Wade scored 24 points as Miami cruised past Philadelphia. Jermaine O'Neal added 20 points for Miami, which won its third straight.

Philadelphia welcomed back Allen Iverson, who returned after missing five games to help care for his ill daughter, Messiah. Iverson came off the bench and shot 1 for 7 from the field for four points.

Thaddeus Young led the 76ers with 16 points, and Andre Iguodala added 11.

At Chicago, Derrick Rose hit his first nine shots and scored 29 points to lead Chicago over New York.

Rose buried all seven shots while scoring 15 in the first quarter and was 14 for 18 in all, just missing his sixth 30-point game.

David Lee led New York with 24 points and 12 rebounds.

**Pistons 108, Timberwolves 85**

At Auburn Hills, Michigan, Jonas Jerebko led a balanced offense with 21 points as Detroit pulled away in the second half to beat Minnesota.

Continued on Page 14



Denver Nuggets head coach George Karl announces his diagnosis with throat cancer at a news conference Tuesday night, Feb. 16, 2010 at the Pepsi Center in Denver. At left is Dr. Jacques Saari and the Nuggets players. Karl faces at least six weeks of radiation and chemotherapy but will attempt to coach at much as possible.

Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — Denver Nuggets coach George Karl has been diagnosed with neck and throat cancer and likely will miss some NBA games and practices while undergoing a rigorous six-week treatment program of radiation and chemotherapy.

## Nuggets coach Karl has neck, throat cancer

His voice breaking at times, Karl revealed the diagnosis late Tuesday with his doctor, Jacques Saari, at his side and surrounded by his team and members of the Nuggets organization.

"My desire is to do whatever I can to stay with my team throughout the treatment that I have to go through," Karl said. "Basically, my belief is this is a championship team and I want to do anything and everything I can to help them continue in their quest that we all want."

Karl, a survivor of prostate cancer in 2005, said he expects to miss at least a couple of upcoming games, at Golden State on Feb. 25 and at Minnesota on March 10. He said assistant Adrian Dantley would lead the team when he's absent.

Karl has coached Denver to the playoffs in each of the last five seasons. His 260 wins since joining the Nuggets in January 2005 are the second most in team history.

The Nuggets are 35-18 this season and leading the Northwest Division.

"One thing about coach Karl is he has more toughness than I could ever imagine," said Oklahoma City Thunder coach Scott Brooks, a former Karl assistant. "He's battled it one time, he's battled it with his son and now he's going to battle it again." □

## Reports: Tanui injured, Lelei killed in crash

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)

— Former 10,000-meter world champion Moses Tanui was injured and former world championship runner David Lelei killed in an auto accident on the outskirts of the Kenyan capital, the Daily Nation newspaper reported Wednesday.

Tanui sustained serious leg and chest injuries and was rushed to Nairobi Hospital, where the newspaper described his condition as being "out of danger."

The 44-year-old Tanui won the 10,000 at the 1991 world championships in Tokyo and silver in 1993, narrowly losing to Haile Gebrselassie.



# Tiger to end months of silence on Friday

**DOUG FERGUSON,**  
**AP Golf Writer**

MARANA, Arizona (AP) — Tiger Woods will end nearly three months of silence Friday when he speaks publicly for the first time since his middle-of-the-night car accident sparked stunning revelations of infidelity.

However, his agent said Woods will not take any questions from a small group of media.

"This is not a press conference," Mark Steinberg said Wednesday.

It will be Woods' first public appearance since Nov. 27, when he crashed his SUV into a tree outside his Florida home. Woods' only comments since then have been made through his Web site.

"It will be good to see Tiger's face again, and see that he's actually out there somewhere," Stewart Cink said. "I think this is the beginning of the comeback process for him." Woods is to speak at 1600 GMT Friday from the clubhouse at the TPC Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., home of the PGA Tour.

"This is all about the next step," Steinberg said. "He's looking forward to it." Still, there was strict control over the appearance, typical of Woods' career.

Steinberg described the gathering as a "small group of friends, colleagues and close associates," who will listen to Woods apologize as he talks about the past and what he plans to do next. He said three wire services have been invited — The Associated Press, Reuters and Bloomberg — and he asked the Golf Writers Association of America to recommend pool reporters.

Only one camera will be in the room to provide live coverage via satellite. Steinberg said other writers with proper credentials could watch from a hotel ballroom more than a mile away.

"The first time out, he's better controlling it," Padraig Harrington said. "Over time, there will be questions. At the moment, the best thing is a more controlled environment



This Nov. 12, 2009, file photo shows Tiger Woods teeing off during the first round the Australian Masters golf tournament at Kingston Heath Golf Club in Melbourne, Australia. Tiger Woods will speak to the media Friday, Feb. 19, 2010, from the clubhouse at the TPC Sawgrass, headquarters of the PGA Tour in Florida, for the first time since revelations about his infidelity, his agent says.

*Associated Press*

and gradually ease his way back into it."

Steinberg said in an e-mail announcing the public appearance, "While Tiger feels that what happened is fundamentally a matter between he and his wife, he also recognizes that he has hurt and let down a lot of other people who were close to him. He also let down his fans. He wants to begin the process of making amends and that's what he's going to discuss." The timing is peculiar. It will be held during the third round

of the Accenture Match Play Championship in Arizona, sure to steal attention away from the first big event of the year. Accenture was the first sponsor to drop Woods when he became embroiled in the sex scandal.

"He's got to come out at some point," Rory McIlroy said. "I suppose he might want to get something back against the sponsor that dropped him. No, I don't know. It just went on for so long. I'm sick of hearing about it. And I'm just looking forward to when he's getting

back on the golf course."

PGA Tour commissioner Tim Finchem said he did not think Woods' appearance was going to undermine a World Golf Championship event.

"We have tournaments every week," Finchem said. "I think it's going to be a story in and of itself. A lot of people are going to be watching golf this week to see what the world of golf says about it, my guess is. So that will be a good thing." As far as the PGA Tour's part in the Woods event, Finchem said: "We were asked to make

the facility available and to help with the logistics. That's what we're doing."

Steinberg said only that Woods' appearance during the championship was "a matter of timing." Asked if it could have waited until Monday, he said, "No."

No other news conference this week drew a larger crowd of reporters than the 20 who surrounded Finchem, a testament to how Woods has dominated the conversation at the Match Play.

"We're all better off when he's playing," Adam Scott said. "I'm curious as to when he'll return to golf."

As for the timing?

"It's his choice," Scott said. "I guess the tour is hosting it there."

Woods made a spectacular fall from his perch atop golf. He was believed to have been the first athlete to gross \$1 billion in earnings and endorsements and, at 14 majors, was closing in on golf's record of 18 majors held by Jack Nicklaus.

It all collapsed in the early morning hours the day after Thanksgiving.

Over the last few months, Woods has been on the cover of gossip magazines and the butt of jokes on national talk shows. In the days before Woods' accident, a National Enquirer story alleged the world's No. 1 golfer had been seeing a New York nightclub hostess. Following the crash, a stream of women came forward to claim they had romantic relationships with Woods. One woman provided Us Weekly magazine with a voicemail she said Woods left her three days before the crash, asking her to take his number off her phone.

Woods admitted to "infidelity" in a statement on his Web site in mid-December and has been on an indefinite break from golf ever since.

Ian Poulter, who went extra holes to win his opening match, was among those curious to hear what Woods had to say. His only hope was to hear about it later.

"Hopefully, I'll be on the golf course and not listening to it," he said. □

## Top seed ousted in first round for the second time

**DOUG FERGUSON**  
**AP Golf Writer**

MARANA, Arizona (AP) — Ross McGowan of England rolled in a 30-foot par putt on the 19th hole to beat Steve Stricker on Wednesday, only the second time in the Match Play Championship that the No. 1 seed was beaten in the opening round.

The day was dominated by news that Tiger Woods was going to speak publicly for the first time Friday, even as 32 matches were being played across the high desert on Dove Mountain.



Steve Stricker, right, congratulates Ross McGowan, of England, after McGowan's 19th hole victory in the opening round of the Match Play Championship golf tournament Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2010, in Marana, Ariz.

*Associated Press*

McGowan only got into the 64-man field because Woods did not enter while on his indefinite break from golf. □



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## Ravens sign WR Donte' Stallworth

This Nov. 6, 2008, file photo shows Cleveland Browns wide receiver Donte' Stallworth running after a pass reception in an NFL football game against the Denver Broncos in Cleveland.

*Associated Press*

OWINGS MILLS, Md. — The Baltimore Ravens say they have signed wide receiver Donte' Stallworth to a one-year contract. Stallworth was recently released by the Cleveland Browns after being reinstated by the NFL following a one-year suspension. He was suspended for violating the league's personal-conduct policy for a DUI vehicular manslaughter charge.

Stallworth served 30 days in a Miami jail for striking and killing a Miami construction worker with his car while driving under the influence of alcohol. The Ravens announced the signing Wednesday. The deal is worth \$900,000 with an additional \$300,000 in incentives.

"There was a time I felt the mistake I made was the end of the world for me," Stallworth said in a statement. "I will

never get that morning back. It weighs on me every day and will for the rest of my life. What I can do is move forward, try to be a better person, try to convince others not to do what I did and warn others about the dangers of drinking and driving. I have to show otherwise that what happened doesn't reflect who I am. "I have to prove that, and, hopefully, I'm on my way to doing that.

I know my apology will never be strong enough for some, but I've made changes, and I'm trying to be a positive influence. It's an honor and privilege to play in the NFL, and I'm so thankful for this opportunity."

Stallworth worked out for the Ravens on Tuesday.

"We've given a lot of thought to this and we've done extensive research into Donte' beyond football," Ravens general manager Ozzie Newsome.

"He made a huge mistake. There's no doubt about that. He has paid a significant price for that and, as he has said, he carries a heavy weight. As (Ravens owner) Steve (Bisciotti) has said, we believe in second chances, and Donte' does deserve that. "But, we've signed him because we want to get better, and we think he has a chance to help us. We worked him out and it's obvious he is working hard to be effective. We thought it was important to sign him now, because other teams were pursuing him and we want him in our offseason program, which starts next month."

Stallworth has caught 296 career passes for 4,383 yards and 32 touchdowns.

He has played for the Saints, Philadelphia Eagles, New England Patriots and the Browns. He had a career-high 70 catches and 945 yards in 2005.

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### NBA ROUNDUP

#### Continued from Page 12

The Pistons had five players in double figures and got at least two points from all 12. Kevin Love paced Minnesota with 22 points and 15 rebounds.

#### Suns 109, Grizzlies 95

At Memphis, Tennessee, Jason Richardson scored 27 points, and Amare Stoudemire added 21 points and 10 rebounds as Phoenix won its sixth game in the last seven with a victory over Memphis.

Richardson was 12 of 17 from the field in the Suns' fifth straight road victory. Robin Lopez finished with 18 points and 10 rebounds. Steve Nash had 16 assists for the Suns.

Rudy Gay led Memphis with 21 points and Zach Randolph had 18 points and 15 rebounds. The Grizzlies lost their fifth straight.

#### Jazz 104, Rockets 95

At Houston, Deron Williams scored 17 points and dished out 15 assists, and Mehmet Okur scored 21 points as Utah continued its midseason surge with a win over Houston.

Paul Millsap scored 20 points and grabbed 12 rebounds, helping the Jazz win for the 14th

time in 16 games. Utah finished with 30 assists to offset 21 turnovers.

Backup center David Andersen and Aaron Brooks scored 18 points apiece for Houston, which committed a season-high 24 turnovers. Celtics 95, Kings 92

At Sacramento, California, Rasheed Wallace and Paul Pierce each scored 17 points as Boston held off Sacramento.

Omri Casspie scored 19 points, Tyreke Evans had 17 points, 11 rebounds and seven assists, and Jason Thompson added 14 points and 11 rebounds for the Kings, who have dropped 19 of 23 games since Dec. 28.

Ray Allen scored 15 points and Eddie House had 12 for Boston, which made six straight free throws in the final 15.4 seconds to seal the victory.

In other NBA games it was, New Jersey 103, Charlotte 94; Miami 105, Philadelphia 78; Detroit 108, Minnesota 85; Chicago 118, New York 85; Phoenix 109, Memphis 95; Oklahoma City 99, Dallas 86; Utah 104, Houston 95; Boston 95, Sacramento 92; Portland 109, L.A. Clippers 87; and L.A. Lakers 104, Golden State 94.



# McGwire returns to baseball, offers fresh apology

By R.B. FALLSTROM

AP Sports Writer

JUPITER, Fla. — Mark McGwire's first day on the job began with a wrong turn into the media room instead of the spring training clubhouse. It ended with another apology for steroid use.

The St. Louis Cardinals' new batting coach spent time in the batting cage with hitters, sat in on a lengthy staff meeting and then answered questions from reporters for more than 15 minutes. He left more than six hours later Wednesday, but not before signing several autographs.

The 46-year-old McGwire seemed at ease in his first extended media availability since admitting a month ago that he used steroids and human growth hormone during his remarkable home run power surge in the 1990s. Echoing remarks he made in January, several times he asked for forgiveness as he seeks to rehabilitate a tarnished image.

"It's something I regret," McGwire said. "I can't say I'm sorry enough to everybody in baseball and across America, and whoever watches this great game. "I think people understand how truly sorry I was for what I did."

McGwire refused to back off his assertion, much criticized, that steroids allowed him to

recover from injuries and stay on the field, but didn't help him break Roger Maris' single season home run record in 1998. McGwire said it was the evolution of his swing and not a body enhanced by drugs that enabled him to hit 70 homers that year, smashing Maris' 37-year-old record of 61, and 65 more in 1999.

"Like I've said, people are going to have their opinions," McGwire said. "Listen, it got me the opportunity to get out there and get more at-bats, and I got the chance to play."

Still, he said, he felt he owed it to the Maris family to call them before his steroids admission became public, saying it was the "right thing to do." He said Pat Maris, Roger Maris' widow was "upset and disappointed."

McGwire said his team was a source of instant understanding after his confession. Especially manager Tony La Russa, a staunch supporter over the years who persuaded Cardinals' management to back McGwire's controversial hire last November as Hal McRae's replacement.

"He's the best, he's like a second father to me," McGwire said. "He's seen me grow as a person, he's seen me grow as a hitter."

Answering critics who accused him of stopping short of full disclosure last month, McGwire countered that he "spoke from my heart." He expressed no regrets from his many interviews and said more than once that he hopes the issue will die down soon. "It took a lot to do what I did," McGwire said. "I spoke the truth. Let's move on and turn this into a really positive thing."

His new pupils were more than ready for that, especially after McGwire's first stint in the batting cage became something of a spectacle. Three television cameras, a half-dozen photographers and more than a dozen reporters watched the mundane proceedings from inside interlocking barricades that served as a holding pen of sorts.

"There are never cameras when I hit," said leadoff hitter Skip Schumaker, who has worked with McGwire during the offseason since 2005. "Maybe when Albert Pujols or Matt Holliday hits, but not me."

David Freese, the leading candidate for the Cardinals' vacant third base job, didn't mind the hubbub. He's happy to be working with McGwire, whose 583 homers are tied for eighth on the career list with Alex Rodriguez.

"It was awesome," Freese



St. Louis Cardinals hitting coach Mark McGwire stands behind a batting cage as he works with Cardinals players during spring training baseball Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2010, in Jupiter, Fla.

Associated Press

said. "Everybody's kind of giddy to get him down here and start working with us."

The real work starts early next week when the full squad reports, though several position players are already in camp. McGwire, never before a coach, pledged to put in long hours and described himself as a quick study of hitters.

"I've told some of the guys, 'If you want me here at 5 a.m., I'll be here at 5 a.m., if you want me here at 7 o'clock

at night hitting, I'll be here at 7 o'clock,'" said McGwire, clad in Cardinals' red and cleared to wear his old No. 25 again. "I'm here for them, I'm not here for me."

Since retiring after the 2001 season, McGwire has made few public appearances. Still, he refused to second-guess his decision to return to the game.

"It's a new chapter in my life," he said. "I'm excited about it. I can't wait to get going." □



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# SPORTS

## Aruba TODAY

### After all the delays, Vonn shines light on Alpine

JOHN PYE,

AP Sports Writer

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Lindsey Vonn won the women's downhill gold medal she was widely expected to dominate at the Vancouver Olympics on Wednesday, ending days of speculation about her bruised shin and concern about the bad weather that has plagued the Alpine program.

The 25-year-old American, who won the world championship downhill title last year and leads the World Cup standings in the downhill, Super-G and Super Combined, beat childhood rival and teammate Julia Mancuso to give the U.S. a 1-2 finish in the marquee women's Alpine race.

Vonn went out 10th and sped down the Franz's Downhill course in 1 minute, 44.19 seconds, 0.56 seconds ahead of Mancuso. Austria's Elisabeth Goergl was next, 1.46 seconds back.

"I gave up everything for this. It means everything to me ... It's awesome," said the glamorous Vonn, who appeared on the cover of the Sports Illustrated's Olympic preview edition, which described her as America's best woman skier ever.

The north American media has followed every step of her recovery from the leg injury in minute detail for the last two weeks.

"I dreamed about what this would feel like, but it is much better in real life," Vonn said. "I can't stop crying. This is everything that I ever wanted and



Lindsey Vonn of the United States, the gold medal winner, center, celebrates with her compatriot Julia Mancuso, silver, left, and Austria's bronze medalist Elisabeth Goergl during the flower ceremony for the Women's downhill at the Vancouver 2010 Olympics in Whistler, British Columbia, Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2010.

hoped for ... standing here today at the finish and to win, is amazing."

In the cross country, Nikita Kriukov picked up Russia's first gold medal of the games when he edged compatriot Alexander Panzhinskiy in a photo finish in the men's sprint, both finishing in 3:36.3.

Marit Bjoergen won Norway's first gold in Vancouver in the women's cross-country sprint, pulling away from Poland's Justyna Kowalczyk and pre-race favorite Petra Majdic of Slovenia. Majdic skied in severe pain after injuring her ribs in a training crash.

Up at Whistler, where clear, blue skies gave no hint of how bumpy the downhill course would be, spectators with "Vonnconver" ski hats and cowbells cheered wildly while Vonn raced down the course, the noise escalating as she skied across the finish and collapsed on her back in triumph.

Other skiers collapsed in pain after a series of spectacular crashes. Romania's Edith Milkos somersaulted out of control and had to be airlifted off the course by a helicopter. Anja Paerson, who won a gold in the slalom and bronze in the downhill at the

2006 Olympics, had been in silver medal position until she lost control on the final jump and crashed through the last gate.

Dominique Gisin of Switzerland wiped out near the same spot. Marion Rolland of France, who was fifth in the downhill at the last world championships, barely made it away from the start before an awkward fall.

It was another concern for the Alpine program, which is way behind schedule due to the conditions at Whistler.

Organizers solved one of the many man-made issues

that have overshadowed the games by opening a viewing ramp Wednesday to get people closer to the Olympic cauldron on the Vancouver waterfront.

Vancouver Olympics organizing committee CEO John Furlong hit back at critics, saying much of the criticism of the games is untrue and unfair.

"When we make mistakes, we have to fix them. We did plan for every eventuality imaginable," he said, adding that "Everything is going well" and the atmosphere is "quite euphoric."

Furlong spoke at a news conference the morning after a surging crowd at a free concert caused a barricade to collapse, leaving 19 people injured.

Nine were taken to the hospital, including one with a suspected broken leg, City of Vancouver officials said. A section of the barricade gave way during the first song of a set by the Canadian band Alexisonfire, who were playing to 7,000 Olympic partygoers. Organizers canceled the concert and were to replace the barricade so that the Live Nation venue could reopen Wednesday.

Luge competition continued with gold at stake in men's doubles later Wednesday on the same course where 21-year-old Nodar Kumaritashvili died in a training run on Friday, hours before the games' opening ceremony.

Kumaritashvili's body arrived back in Bakuriani, a village of about 1,500 located in one of Georgia's most popular winter sports regions, early Wednesday.



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*The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba: Set for 2012 opening*

## Ritz-Carlton Adds Caribbean Presence Aruba



**Mr. Bill Marriott together with the Prime Minister of Aruba Mike Eman pictured yesterday after a luncheon in the famed Ruth's Chris Restaurant of the Aruba Marriott Resort and Stellaris Casino.**

**PALM BEACH** - The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company, L.L.C. and the Government of Aruba announced today plans to open The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba, an exclusive 320-room oceanfront resort situated on the Caribbean island's famed Palm Beach. The resort will offer several restaurants, a luxurious spa, two swimming

pools and a 24-hour casino. In addition to spacious rooms and suites, the hotel will include The Ritz-Carlton Club Level, a private floor accessible only by elevator key, offering light fare and dedicated concierge service throughout the day.

The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba, projected to open in late 2012, will be the seventh location



in The Ritz-Carlton portfolio of award winning Caribbean properties, joining existing hotels in St. Thomas (U.S. Virgin Islands), Jamaica, Grand Cayman, Puerto Rico, Mexico and The Bahamas.

"Aruba is an island destination with growing appeal to discerning travelers from Europe and the United States. Its stunning beaches and majestic views make the island one of those exceptional places in the Southern Caribbean, blending serenity and scenic attractions our guests seek when planning a vacation," said Ezzat Coutry, senior vice president, Southeast Region, Caribbean and Latin America, The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company, L.L.C. "It is an extraordinary location for luxury development on the

island," added Coutry.

"I am thrilled to partner with The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company on such an exciting project that will set a new standard for luxury travel to the island," commented

Walter Stipa, developer for The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba. "I am confident that The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba will be a highly successful endeavor for all partners involved," he added.

*Continued on Next Page*



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# Ritz-Carlton Adds Caribbean Presence Aruba



Continued from Page B1

## THE RITZ-CARLTON ADDS TO CARIBBEAN PRESENCE

Newly elected Prime Minister Mike Eman stated, "in all honesty, the credit for

this project should go to the former administration. Due to a rapid expansion of hotels and condominiums over the last 20 years we are concerned that we are left with too few vacant public beach areas,"



said Eman. "The fact that we are looking at the addition of such a prestigious hotel as the Ritz Carlton reduces this pain for us.

We hope to work closely with Mr. Marriott to achieve the vision of our new government that will put more emphasis on sustainability and durability in the development of our tourism industry for the people of

Aruba and our visitors alike," Eman added.

Located off the coast of Venezuela, Aruba is renowned for miles of white powder sand beaches and crystal blue water that boasts a warm tropical climate year-round. The 21 mile-long island is situated on the southern part of the Caribbean Sea and features

many diverse influences as a result of its rich history. The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba is located in Palm Beach, home to some of the island's finest beaches. Lush tropical surroundings and a balmy temperature allow for swimming, sunbathing and relaxation by the water. The resort will bring a new level of elegance in accommodations and amenities to the island. □

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# MPs seek clarity on illegal Curaçao abortion remedies

THE HAGUE--Members of Dutch Parliament (MPs) Johan Remkes of the liberal democratic VVD party and Ineke van Gent of the green

left party GroenLinks have posed questions on abortion practices in Curaçao.

The two sent a number of written questions to Dutch

State Secretary of Kingdom Relations Ank Bijleveld-Schouten following an article that appeared in the Curaçao daily Antilliaans Dagblad on Friday.

In the article, based on a study by Wendele van der Wiele of the Centre for Latin America Research and Documentation CEDLA of University of Amsterdam, it was said that many women in Curaçao resorted to illegal abortion pills and herb concoctions to terminate pregnancies. These pills and herb mixtures are openly for sale at the market in Punda, Willemstad, and authorities have not been taking action to stop the practice.

No research has been done into possible negative side effects of these pills and herb mixtures. There is no medical control on the use of

these remedies, and women are not receiving after-care. "Taking these remedies can result in major life-threatening blood loss," said Van der Wiele.

Abortion is illegal in the Netherlands and is punishable by law. Doctors do perform abortions under certain circumstances, but many women can't afford the NAf. 300 procedure. As a result, many women in Curaçao resort to illegal remedies. General Practitioner on the island Dr. Adriana Boersema has been advocating legalising abortion so that pregnancies can be terminated responsibly, under the care of a medical professional. Remkes and Van Gent asked Bijleveld-Schouten if she could give an indication of the number of women who

resort to illegal remedies to terminate unwanted pregnancies. "What methods are used and what are the health risks? And who is supervising the medical use of these alternatives to abortion? Is it true that general practitioners offer paid abortion services, but that because of the high cost, women resort to dangerous alternatives?" asked the MPs.

Van Gent and Remkes wanted to know if the State Secretary was willing to discuss the issue of abortion and the high risk of alternative termination of pregnancy with the governments of the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba. They also asked about an information campaign about sexuality and warning against the health risks of unsafe sex. □

## Row about cancellation of Bonaire referendum



In an interview with Radio Netherlands Worldwide, Dutch Freedom Party MP Hero Brinkman claims that the Governor of the Netherlands Antilles, Frits Goedgedrag, was acting under pressure from the Netherlands when he cancelled the referendum scheduled to take place on the island of Bonaire.

Mr Brinkman added that the people of Bonaire have a right to a referendum about their future constitutional status. The referendum would apparently have offered the choice between becoming a special municipality of the Netherlands or an unspecified "association" with the Netherlands.

On Tuesday the Freedom party submitted a request to the Deputy Minister for Kingdom Relations, Anke Bijleveld, for an emergency debate about the cancellation of the referendum. Apparently, the decision to cancel was connected with disagreement about the exact content and wording of the referendum. The call for an emergency debate in parliament has the

support of the Socialist Party and Rita Verdonk's Proud of the Netherlands party. □

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*From April 16th through the 18th 2010 at the Westin Resort*

## Panel of international experts to lead first Aruba Symposium on Autism

ORANJESTAD - Fundacion Autismo Aruba this year is organizing the first International Autism Symposium in Aruba on April 16 through the 18<sup>th</sup> at the Westin Resort. The objective of the symposium is the enrich knowledge on autism amongst professionals in Aruba. Many children with autism encounter problems especially when they first enter the school system here, as there are neither protocols nor structures on how best to deal with a child that may require a different approach. Teachers, medical doctors and others working in the social/educational fields here are still grasping to find the best ways on how to help parents with autistic children, many of who are struggling with uncertainty regarding their children's future.

Fundacion Autismo Aruba was established to increase awareness on autism in Aruba and also to foster a broader, national strategy regarding this neurological disorder that is affecting a large number of Aruban children (and adults). Without proper attention, most of these children will grow up without realizing their full potential, thus robbing the community of people who have the capability to become productive citizens. The symposium will include presentations of and workshops by renowned, international specialists on autism, who will elaborate on the latest developments and research on autism spectrum disorders and treatment. Among others, the Aruba Autism Foundation invited Dr. Connie Kasari

who will deliver the keynote address 'What Research Tells Us about Peer Relationships at School, for Children with Autism.' Dr. Lauren Underwood will elaborate on the biomedical developments in the field of autism and the benefit of combining these with conventional therapies. Dutch expert Dr. Claudine Dietz will focus on Early Detection of Autism. She will also lead a workshop for medical professionals on the same theme. Dutch psychiatrist M. Santana's participation here will shed some light on autism in adults and adolescents, while Dr. Valerie Paradiz, Director of NYU's 'Child Study Center's Asperger Institute' is to speak about 'Professionalism and motherhood, both in the spectrum.' The Dutch Learning

Institute's Autism Team of North Netherlands will address the issue of 'Autism and Education.' The aim of the foundation here is to help medical and educational professionals in Aruba to broaden their knowledge on autism. Particularly, early detection and intervention are key elements that will be brought forth in the symposium, as these would greatly improve developmental opportunities for these children in the future. Although the symposium is directed at medical, educational and behavioral specialists, parents are welcome to participate as well. In fact, Antillean behavioral specialist Inge Boutier will host a workshop for parents,

'Living with Autism at Home.' The symposium in addition will provide networking opportunities, and will serve as a platform to exchange information and experiences. For more information on the first International Symposium on Autism in Aruba, contact Fundacion Autismo Aruba, Irenestraat 21, Oranjestad and telephone 5881179, email: fundacion\_autismoaruba@yahoo.com. Fundacion Autismo Aruba is a non-profit organization officially established in June 2005 with the mission to work in the interest of people with autism. FAA does not receive government funding and is completely dependent on volunteers and donations for its existence. □





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## The Aruba Wine Extravaganza promises to delight guests in September

PALM BEACH – At a press conference hosted jointly by the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa, the Aruba Tourism Authority, the Aruba Hotel & Tourism Association and fine wine purveyors Romar Trading, the Aruba Trading Company and Arion Wine Company the upcoming first annual Aruba Wine Extravaganza was introduced.

A special not for profit foundation was set up for the purpose of hosting the elaborate event each year, bringing South American wine producers together with North American wine lovers on the island of Aruba. The festival's organizing team is looking to attract



over 400 wine lovers for the events, attended by 30 to 40 different South American wineries, on Sept 2nd, 3rd,

and 4th, 2010.

The program includes wine tastings under the stars, special lunches, and a

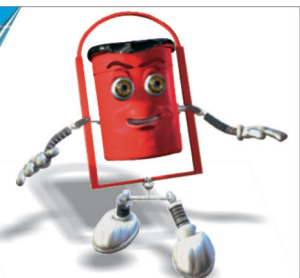
sparkling wine reception in the ballroom foyer followed by a gala dinner and award presentation.

Check out the website for complete information: [www.arubawineextravaganza.com](http://www.arubawineextravaganza.com)



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# \*\*\*HUMAN HINTS\*\*\*

*Learn To Direct Your Life*

In order to take control of our lives, we must define and prioritize our goals. Get a clear picture of where you want your life to go. Organize your long term goals in all areas of your life, personal, professional, emotional, logical, spiritual, etc. Study your goals and become familiar with them. How does each one make you feel? How do they tie in and connect with each other?

Break each long-term goal into shorter, manageable goals, then break those subgoals down even further, until you have at least a month worth of daily and weekly goals. As you accomplish each small task, you will become closer to your long-term future.

Make each long-term goal clear in your mind. Concentrate on how you will feel upon success. Surround yourself with

icons and pictures to remind you of your long term goals throughout the course of a hectic day wrought with unwanted surprises.

When all your action becomes necessary and purposeful, you make your own decisions. You take control of your own destiny. With each purposeful action, you empower yourself and define your own life, instead of your life defining you.

You are in charge of your own life, through purposeful goal setting and following through with purposeful action. As you learn these skills, you will stop floating aimlessly through life.

Your life reflects your thoughts. Your thoughts direct what your life is like. As you focus your thoughts and take purposeful action, your life must go in that

direction. Thought, emotion and action create reality.

Don't even think of how you're going to get there, no matter how impossible the goal may seem. Leave the journey to the Universe, which has the power of infinite organization. You define the goal, and the journey is the exciting surprise.


This helps us detach from our emotions throughout the day. When we focus on the big picture, ultimate goal, daily trials seem less important. We know where we are going, and whatever is immediately in front of us is just part of the journey to the destination we define.

Go to [www.HumanHints.com](http://www.HumanHints.com) to sign up to receive this column in your email each day.

~Quentin Danziger  
Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has also studied many avenues of alternative thought. HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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## ALOHA BRIDGE CLUB ARUBA (ABCA)

*RESULTS THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2010*

A total of 12 pairs attended the morning bridge session at the Members

Lounge of the Aruba Beach Club Resort.

The following guest players attended: Emily and Joe Metz, Betty Domes, Pete Otterman, Steef Schouwstra, Honore Allen and Marty Brait.

The results 50% and higher are as follows:

- 1 Honore Allen / Marty Brait 67.50 %
- 2 Steef Schouwstra / Pete Otterman 59.17 %
- 3 Annette Ybeles / Joke Henriquez 57.92 %
- 4 Gerry Meenhorst / Betty Domes 55.42 %
- 5 Willy Flanegin / Maritza van Romondt 54.58 %
- 6 Ghislaine Mendes / Iola Tjin-Tham-Sjin 50.00 %.

RESULTS FRIDAY, 12 FEBRUARY 2010

On Friday evening a total of 11 pairs attended the bridge session in the Frank Conway Room of Casa del Mar.

The following guest players joined: Agi and Andy Bodony, Anje and Steef Schouwstra

The results 50% and higher are as follows:

- 1 Anje and Steef Schouwstra 62.50 %
- 2 Joke Henriquez / Annemieke de Cuba 55.00 %

- 3 Agi and Andy Bodony 53.65 %
- 4 Marion Pijper / Lienneke Kluiving 53.13 %
- 5 Iola Tjin-Tham-Sjin / Katy Yarzagaray 51.88 %
- 6 Toos Nierop / Chris Joosten 50.63 %
- 7 Geke In 't Veld / Willy Flanegin 50.52 %.

Friday evening the club held their General Members Meeting.

The board for the club year 2010 - 2011 will consist of the following members: Joke Henriquez: President, Addy Eilers: Secretary; Annemieke de Cuba: Treasurer, Liesbeth van den Ham: First Commissioner, Emmy de Cuba: Second Commissioner.

Aloha Bridge Club Aruba meets twice a week: on Thursday mornings at the Members Lounge of the Aruba Beach Club, starting at 9.00 am and on Friday evenings at the Frank Conway Room of Casa del Mar starting at 7.30 pm. Signing up closes ten minutes before starting time. Fee for guest players: \$ 6.00 or Afl. 10.00 per person.

The club can also be of assistance in finding single players a bridge partner. Please call Addy Eilers : tel. 582-4953. □



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the world are found back on the menu and they are already well known for the daily changing specials. If you have a large party, or if there is anything you feel like in particular, Fishes & More can always arrange to have your dinner cooked just for you, as they work

only with fresh and honest products! Ideally located in front of the Occidental Resort (Former Allegro), they are visited both by individuals and families alike, as they have a super kids menu, so they can enjoy their dinner as much as you

will yours!

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square are open until eleven. See what its like to experience real fresh dining joy with a twist!

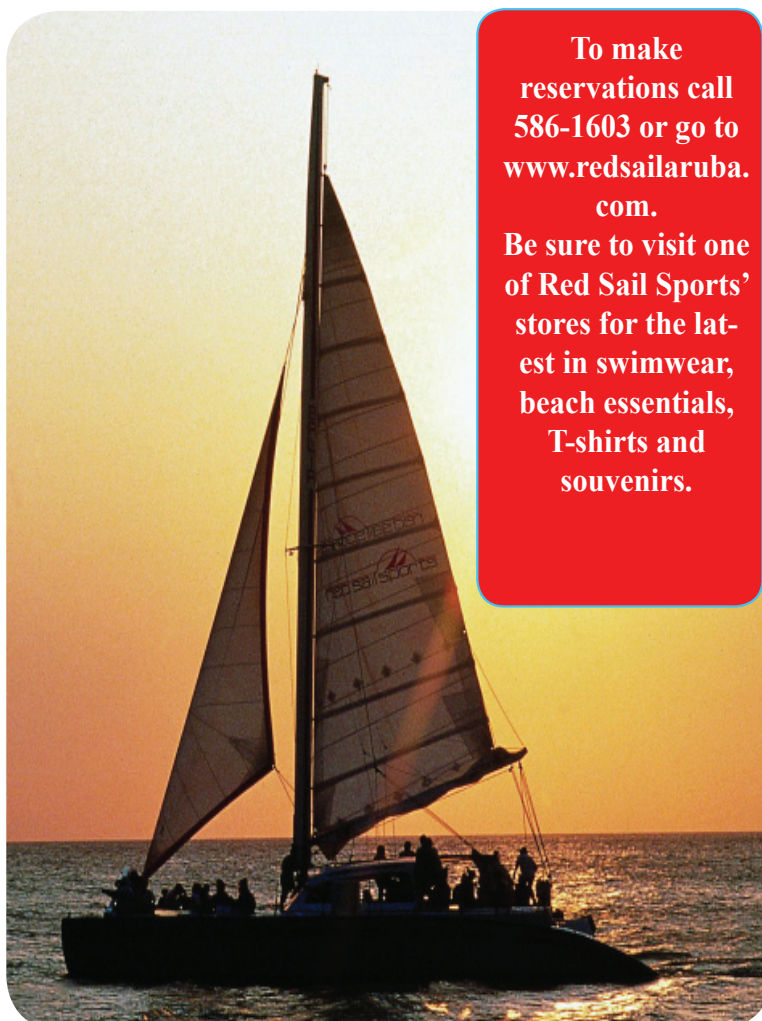
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Every Friday

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To make reservations call 586-1603 or go to [www.redsailaruba.com](http://www.redsailaruba.com).

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# The Moore's golden anniversary in Aruba makes the Jersey papers!



EAGLE BEACH - Joan and Herbert Moore of Clayton, New Jersey have been dedicated fans of Aruba since first vacationing on the island ten years ago, and are soon to be awarded their "Distinguished Visitor" status



from the Aruba Tourism Authority. "Our long-time travel agent, Nikki of Liberty Travel, had come to know us very well," recalls Herbert of their decision to first vacation to Aruba, "she said she was certain we would love it here, and she was absolutely right! We have been to a lot of other islands and as far as we're concerned, there is none that compares to Aruba!" The Moore's have visited every year around Valentine's Day since then, staying at either the Divi or Tamarijn Mega All-Inclusive Resorts, but this past holiday season rewarded them with an entirely new Aruban experience. To celebrate their golden wedding anniversary they arranged, for the very first time, to have their four children, daughters Kathy, Karen and Kim and son David spend the week with them, along with a passel of grandchildren, totalling fourteen in all. Joan and Herbert even had special blue tee shirts with palm trees identifying them as the Moore Clan printed up for every family member, resulting in a spectacular group photo on the beach taken by their good buddy at the Divi/Tamarijn, Leisure Services Manager Francis Ridderstap. Back in their home state, The Sentinel newspaper thought it such a heartwarming story, it made top of page two in their February 3 issue. Joan and Herbert have returned for another ten days in Aruba all to themselves, but report they and their progeny were



so thrilled spending the week together at the beginning of the year, they are determined to make it a new family tradition. "Our kids and grandkids missed being with us in Aruba for New Year's Eve by just one day," commented the Jersey couple, "this year we are going to remedy that, because it had to be the most exciting New Year's Eve we have ever experienced, and we want to share it with them, particularly the little ones.

Being on the beach, sipping champagne and enjoying the amazing special meal prepared by the resort for the occasion while watching fireworks all around the island is the best New Year's celebration to be had anywhere. The rest of the week with all of us together was absolutely memorable, and all our kids now love the island as we do. Now they understand what we have been raving about all these years!" □



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The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the

slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but Texas de Brazil's version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm, sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, home-made soups, and much more.

The salad bar is included in the continuous service meal with unlimited choices from the grilled meats, but for vegetarians or the non-meat eaters, a special price is offered for just the salad bar. Of course, for those looking to splurge while on vacation, Texas de Brazil will gladly serve their garlic mashed potatoes, traditional fried plantains, and their world-famous parmesan cheese bread as part of the meal.

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PALM BEACH - STEINFELD presents WOW factor! at the MAGIC LIVE!® ...theater-of-illusions show, Westin - Aruba opened on December 25 at 9PM. MAGIC Live!® theater-of-illusions show, starring Adam Steinfeld... is an amazing night of Magic, Grand Illusions and Comedy, superb magic at it's

highest level, a lot of fun from start to finish, laugh-out-loud funny, intelligent, sophisticated, unconventional grand illusions, that will keep you asking, 'how the heck did he do that?' Perfect for the holiday season, have you ever dreamed of disappearing and reappearing in an instant? Master illusionist, comedy magician, Adam Steinfeld opened DEC 25, MagicLive show at the WESTIN, Aruba, nightly 9PM, every night, doors open at 8:30PM, and tickets may be purchased at the door, in the intimate Magic Live!

theater-of-illusions theater, every seat is close to the stage. In his new illusion he calls; "PRESENT", a tall girl steps into a tiny box, elevated in-the-air, the box spins 360 degrees,

then the sections are taken away, one by one, until the girl vanishes completely... right before your eyes!

Then as if that isn't enough to run to your local optometrist, he re-assembles the box for the magicbabe to make a triumphant reappearance. It's an all new original illusion not seen anywhere else in the world.

I went back to see the show during rehearsals, and still couldn't figure out the secret.

Tourists and local fans will remember Steinfeld for past performances, in Aruba,



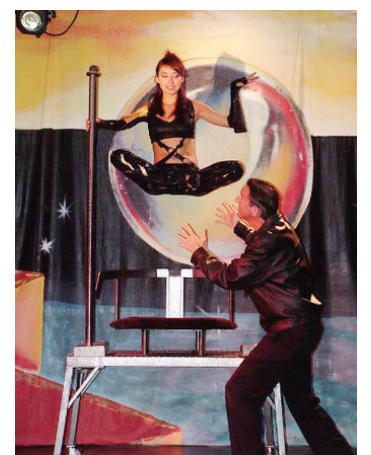
and on network television, Mr. Steinfeld recently authored "the Houdini Conspiracy", aka "Houdini Lives!", a collaborated work with new england mystery writer

Al Blanchard, he believes will be turned into a feature film.

The intimate Magic Live!® theater-of-illusions showroom is located just off the lobby of the Westin-Aruba in high-rise area, j.e. irausquin boulevard 77. Palm Beach, Aruba. Magic Live!® BOX

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## IF YOU GO

What: Magic Live! theater-of-illusions show  
Where: Westin - Aruba, palm beach (high-rise area)  
Who: starring, comedy illusionist, Adam Steinfeld  
Time: 9:00 pm, theater opens at 8:30pm  
Tickets: at the door  
Price: \$19.95 under 15, \$29.5 adults  
Group Sales: 561-1090  
website: [www.MagicLive.com](http://www.MagicLive.com)  
Blog: [www.MagicOnTheBeach.com](http://www.MagicOnTheBeach.com)



# Triple Celebrations at Amazonia Churrascaria



PALM BEACH – Valentine's Day delivered excellent food in a romantic atmosphere at Amazonia Churrascaria. However, this year Valentine's Day celebration mingled with

Carnival 2010 and Chinese New Year, as Amazonia Churrascaria rewarded visitors and locals having sumptuous dinner at the Brazilian-styled steakhouse with great hospitality and ambiance.

All holidays including a birthdays and anniversaries, are always celebrated in great style at Amazonia Churrascaria, says General Manager Hubert Solagnier, who also informed that the restaurant will be hosting a press conference in the very near future to launch its festive 10th anniversary celebration.





# Dutch Parliament postpones its visit

THE HAGUE--The Dutch Parliamentary delegation that would visit Curaçao and St. Maarten during the week of February 22 has postponed its trip because of flight issues.

Late reservations of tickets prevented the delegation from travelling jointly. Due to lack of space on the regular flights from Amsterdam to Curaçao, members of the delegation would have to travel on separate flights on the trip to Curaçao and back.

This was reason for delegation leader and Chairman of the Second Chamber's Permanent Committee of Antillean and Aruban Affairs NAAZ, Willibrord van Beek, to postpone the trip. "We couldn't get it organised," he said on Friday. Earlier this week, NAAZ decided to travel to Curaçao and St. Maarten to meet with the Island Councils of all five islands.

This Tuesday, NAAZ will meet to decide on a new travel date. "We want to meet with the Island Councils before we handle the Kingdom consensus law proposals in the Second Chamber," said Van Beek.

Initially, NAAZ had opted to meet the week of February 22 because the First and Second Chamber would be in recess. Van Beek did not want to mention a new date for travel, but possibly the trip will be planned for the week of March 8. However, March 8 would be unsuitable for the delegation members of the First and Second Chamber because Parliament would not be in session that week. "That is a new hurdle that we will have to take," said Van Beek. The delegation leader said that postponing the trip would not necessarily have negative consequences for the speed at which the legislation for new constitutional relations in the Kingdom has to be handled. On March 4, the Second Chamber will vote on the first package of draft laws for the BES islands - Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba - during

a plenary session. It concerns the Public Entities Law for the BES islands - WolBES, the law on finances of the public entities BES - FinBES, the amendment to the Electoral Law in connection with the new constitutional status of the BES islands as public entities - Kieswet, the Implementation Law BES - Aanpassingswet BES, and the law to protect personal data. The package also includes the approval and termination of treaties for the BES islands.

The second package of law proposals for the BES islands, as well as legislation concerning the dismantling of the Country the Netherlands Antilles and the establishing of Countries Curaçao and St. Maarten, will tentatively be handled in a plenary session on March 23.

This package includes the Kingdom consensus law to set up the Prosecutor's Offices of Countries Curaçao and St. Maarten and of the BES islands, the law on the Council of Maintenance of Law and Order - Raad voor de Rechtshandhaving and the Kingdom consensus law to establish the Police Forces of Countries Curaçao and St. Maarten and of the BES islands. □

# Alleged human traffickers in Suriname face up to 10 years in jail

By Ivan Cairo

PARAMARIBO, Suriname -- Prosecutors here are seeking jail terms up to 10 years for four suspects in an alleged human trafficking case. While the main suspect should get 10 years, his co-defendants should receive sentences of 8 years for their role in a conspiracy to traffic several youngsters from Suriname to Trinidad and Tobago in 2009. Three other suspects were already slapped with prison terms ranging from two-and-a-half to three years, several weeks earlier.

The two men and two women have pleaded not guilty, claiming they were no part of the alleged criminal ring to exploit the youngsters. Three suspects gave evidence before a court here that they only acted on instructions of the main suspect.

Court documents reveal that under pretence of being recruited for an international culinary training in Trinidad and Tobago, a number of young people, including men and women, were lured to Port of Spain, after paying a certain amount of money to the suspects.

The victims were told that after completing the course the organization would take them to the Netherlands where they would be furnished with well-paying jobs in the hospitality industry.

Upon arrival in Trinidad, however, the victims were held captive and their passports seized, while they were forced to sleep and feed on the floor, and commit indecent and

sexual acts. On several occasions they were forced to call their parents in Suriname to send money for the suspects, telling the parents they were doing fine.

Ultimately several parents became suspicious and threatened to go to the police, forcing the suspects to release the youngsters. Several victims reported the case to the authorities, and a criminal investigation followed.

A number of suspects were arrested here while four suspects fled from Trinidad to Curaçao. They were subsequently extradited to Suriname.

Defence lawyers will present final arguments at the next hearing.

During the past several years, Suriname authorities have stepped up anti-human trafficking efforts after US government reports cited human trafficking as a major human rights violation in the country. New legislation came into effect with maximum jail terms of 20 years, while police and immigration officers and other officials received training to detect cases of human trafficking.

A special Trafficking in Person Unit, led by a prosecutor, was established and a nationwide awareness campaign has been launched to inform the public and special interest groups. Since then the number of human trafficking cases before the courts has increased and a number of suspects have been sent to jail. □



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# St. Maarten has issues with ERNA amendment

WILLEMSTAD - National Alliance (NA) parliamentarians have issues with the draft amendment to the Islands Regulations of the Netherlands Antilles ERNA that are necessary for the holding of early Island Council elections, possibly in June.

The draft amendment was discussed in the Central Committee of Parliament last week Tuesday. The amendment was prepared under the guidance of Constitutional Affairs Minister Roland Duncan (NA) and vetted earlier this year by the Legal Affairs Department of the Central Government.

The proposal states that “in the mean time” each Island Council of the Island Territory of Curaçao and St. Maarten could be dismantled separately.

The draft states that the Island Council of the Island Territory of St. Maarten can be dismantled “in the meantime.”

Pantophlet said the word “meantime” was not written as two separate words in the draft as it was in the proposal. “We need a guarantee that St. Maarten is not left in the cold. Curaçao already has its infrastructure in place if it chooses to leave now. St. Maarten will be left in a precarious situation, because our infrastructure still has to be put in place.” The NA faction has asked for a more detailed explanation of Article 16A Sub 1-4 of the draft ordinance amendment.

“We also wanted to know why preconditions were set for St. Maarten to extend its Island Council from 11 to 15 members, because as far as we know the three previous times the Islands Regulations of the Netherlands Antilles was amended there weren’t any preconditions set,” Pantophlet said.

He said his faction definitely needed to study this very technical document properly, because after its approval by Parliament and then the Kingdom Government, amending it again might not be easy.

“It has taken us almost 10 years to get here and the faction of the National Alliance has always said that we were not ready. Don’t forget we need to have a good starting position. Now that we are closer than ever to becoming Country

St. Maarten, we should not allow ourselves to be pushed into something that will not benefit the people of St. Maarten. Everyone must cooperate with us to accomplish this feat,” he said on Sunday.

## Why bother?

The future countries St. Maarten and Curaçao decided during the Political Steering Group Meeting in Willemstad last week Thursday to stick to their earlier agreement for a shared Central Bank and joint “own” currency, thus not switching to the US dollar as some had suggested. What the new currency will be called or look like is still unclear, but it is already obvious that it can’t be introduced by October 10, 2010, when the new constitutional relations within the Dutch Kingdom are supposed to take effect.

The current Antillean guilder therefore will be maintained for the time being. This begs the questions that if the new “own currency” of St. Maarten and Curaçao is going to be much the same as the current Antillean guilder in terms of being pegged to the US dollar, etcetera, why even bother to change it?

To begin with, while the “St. Maarten/Curaçao (or Curaçao/St. Maarten) guilder or dollar” would hardly be an appropriate name for the future joint currency, viable alternatives such as “Dutch Antilles dollar or guilder” have the same problem as the current “Antillean guilder,” in that the Netherlands Antilles will no longer exist after 10-10-10. A “Dutch Caribbean guilder or dollar” also hardly makes sense, as neither Aruba nor the BES islands Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba are to be included.

Rather than putting a lot of money and effort into designing and producing a new joint currency that won’t differ much from the current Antillean guilder, perhaps it would make more sense to just keep the latter for now and take more time to study whether an own currency for just two islands is really advisable and desirable. In that sense it’s important to remember that Antillean Central Bank President Emsley Tromp is the biggest proponent of switching to the US dollar, even though this would greatly reduce the scope of the very institution he heads.

So, instead of a basically purely cosmetic change from one “own” currency to another, the wise thing to do probably is to save everybody the trouble, with everything else that’s going in connection with the process of constitutional change, and seriously look into “dollarisation” in the meantime. For an island like St. Maarten with a one-pillar tourism economy that depends heavily on the US market and where the dollar already rules in practice, that option deserves at least some further consideration. □

## Scarce commodity

Readers may have been somewhat surprised by yesterday’s front page report that the National Alliance (NA) faction in the Antillean Parliament has issues with the proposed amendment of the Islands Regulation ERNA to make possible early elections for the Island Councils of Curaçao and St. Maarten that will become the Parliaments of the two future countries when the new relations within the Dutch Kingdom are scheduled to take effect on October 10, 2010.

After all, the draft legislation comes from the desk of Home Affairs Minister Roland Duncan of the same NA. This leads one to wonder whether there is sufficient consultation within the St. Maarten party that is currently in office at both the island and federal level, and won all the island’s three seats in the Antillean Parliament during the January 22 elections, practically guaranteeing it will be part of the new Central Government now being formed as well.

Not that there is anything wrong with one or more Members of Parliament taking an independent position, as they are there to control government and expected to perform their duty as elected representatives with honour and in good conscience. When an entire faction says it needs more time to study a draft law submitted by its very own minister, however, it raises questions.

That is all the more the case where it involves a crucial piece of legislation in terms of completing the constitutional changes so that St. Maarten can attain country status as planned. The whole idea is to dissolve the current Island Councils that were voted into office until July 1, 2011, early and to elect new ones that will become the first Parliaments of the two new countries.

The difference is that in St. Maarten the Island Council to be elected probably some time mid-June will be expanded from the current 11 to 15 seats, as that is the number of seats in the island’s future Parliament. For Curaçao the number of seats will remain the current 21, but there is the added problem that the PAR/PNP/FOL coalition that supports the current process has only a minimal majority of 11 seats, while a two-thirds majority is needed to pass the draft constitution for the new country.

If that majority cannot be obtained, as apparently will be the case in Curaçao, the Island Council must be dissolved and a new one elected that then can pass the constitution with a simple majority. This means the coalition most probably will time the handling of the draft constitution in such a way that the dissolving of the Island Council for lack of a two-thirds majority will coincide with the process to elect a new Island Council and future Parliament.

With such an elaborate scheme on the horizon, it is understandable that St. Maarten’s Members of Parliament want to make sure there are no negative consequences for their island and Minister Duncan would do well to address their concerns. However, as they are all of the same party that should not be very difficult or take too much time, because time is become an increasingly scarce commodity as 10-10-10 draws ever closer. □





# Presidente Colombia Alvaro Uribe imbatible en sondeo

*Ex ministro Santos posible sucesor*

BOGOTÁ (Reuters) - El presidente de Colombia, Alvaro Uribe, continúa imbatible en las encuestas y lograría su reelección cómodamente si es candidato, mientras su ex ministro de Defensa Juan Manuel Santos se proyecta como su sucesor si el mandatario declina o queda impedido, reveló un sondeo. Una encuesta del Centro Nacional de Consultoría difundida el martes en la noche por el noticiero CM& reveló que si la Corte Constitucional declara legal el referendo que autoriza la segunda reelección y se logra la aprobación de la consulta en las urnas, Uribe ganaría con un 46 por ciento de los votos en las elecciones del 30 de mayo.

El mandatario, quien aún no ha dicho si aspira a ser candidato, vencería ampliamente al ex alcalde de Medellín Sergio Fajardo quien obtendría un 9 por ciento de los votos; al candidato del izquierdista Polo Democrático, Gustavo Petro, también con un 9 por ciento y a la ex embajadora Noemí Sanín quien alcanzaría un 7 por ciento.

Uribe también superaría al candidato del Partido Liberal, Rafael Pardo, quien alcanzaría un 6 por ciento y al ex senador y candidato del partido Cambio Radical, Germán Vargas Lleras, con un 5 por ciento.

Pero en el escenario de que el presidente no pueda postularse o decline hacerlo, Santos ganaría pero con un escenario más complicado en el que tendría que enfrentar en una segunda vuelta a Fajardo.

El ex ministro de Defensa, quien logró asestar los más duros golpes a las rebeldes Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), obtendría un 18 por ciento de los votos, mientras que el ex alcalde de Medellín obtendría un 12 por ciento.

## OTROS CANDIDATOS

Sanín, quien aspira a convertirse en la candidata del Partido Conservador, alcanzaría un 11 por ciento; Petro llegaría a un 9 por ciento; Lleras a un 6 por ciento, al igual que Pardo.

Pero en la eventualidad de que Uribe no se postule o no lo pueda hacer, el voto en blanco alcanzaría un 6 por ciento, mientras que un 12 por ciento de los encuestados se declaró indeciso.

A un poco más de tres meses de las elecciones presidenciales, la campaña está concentrada en tratar de resolver el interrogante de si Uribe podrá y está interesado en buscar su segunda reelección inmediata y extender su Gobierno hasta el 2014. □



Imagen de archivo del ex ministro de Defensa de Colombia Juan Manuel Santos, en una entrevista para Reuters en Bogotá. Feb 10 2010. REUTERS/John Vizcaino/archivo

## Venezuela sancionará derroche de agua para frenar caída embalses

CARACAS (Reuters) - Venezuela sancionará a partir de marzo el uso excesivo de agua con aumentos en las facturas y cortes del servicio para tratar de contener la caída de sus embalses, de los que obtiene la mayor parte de su generación eléctrica, informó el miércoles un diario local. El presidente Hugo Chávez ha anunciado planes de racionamiento, sanciones al consumo excesivo y estímulos al ahorro para reducir el gasto de luz y agua, en medio de una crisis eléctrica que está afectando su popularidad meses antes de unas elecciones legislativas.

Y recientemente, el Gobierno señaló el peligro de que se produzca un colapso en el sistema eléctrico si la cota de la represa de El Guri, que genera en torno a la mitad del suministro, cae por debajo de los 240 metros sobre el nivel del mar, apenas unos 17 metros menos que el nivel actual. “Aquellas personas que no les importe pagar el exceso y continúen derrochando el agua, les cortarán el servicio, así tengan su factura al día”, dijo el ministro del Ambiente, Alejandro Hatcher, en entrevista con el diario local Últimas Noticias, agregando que el plan comenzará el 1 de

marzo.

Tomando Caracas como referencia por ser el estado con la facturación más costosa, Hatcher explicó que cada metro cúbico de agua costará 1,0 bolívar (0,38 dólares) cuando el suministro mensual esté entre 40 y 99 metros cúbicos en áreas residenciales.

Si el suministro alcanza los 100 metros cúbicos, cada litro costará 3,50 bolívares, y de ahí en adelante se cobrará a 5 bolívares. En las áreas comerciales e industriales los excesos de consumo serán sancionados con cobros de hasta 7 bolívares por metro cúbico de agua. □

## Fujimori operado de ulceraciones en la lengua

LIMA (AP) - El ex presidente Alberto Fujimori, condenado por delitos de lesa humanidad, fue operado el miércoles por segunda vez de ulceraciones en la lengua, informó su hijo menor. “Fue una operación a una lesión de 4 milímetros, pero lo que se ha extirpado en total han sido cuatro centímetros para reducir los riesgos de que vuelva a rebrotar la lesión”, dijo Kenji Fujimori a periodistas.

“Alberto Fujimori va a estar en observación hasta el jueves cuando tal vez los médicos decidan darle de alta”, agregó Kenji. Añadió que la intervención duró casi 40 minutos pero los resultados respecto a si las lesiones en la lengua son cancerosas “se van a tener más adelante”. “En estos momentos mi padre se encuentra anestesiado y en recuperación”, precisó. En el 2008 a Fujimori se le extirpó una lesión en la lengua conocida como leucoplasia. Fujimori es operado en el Instituto Nacional de Enfermedades Neoplásicas (INEN), un centro médico especializado en el tratamiento de enfermedades tumorales, donde sus familiares esperan los resultados de la intervención quirúrgica. □



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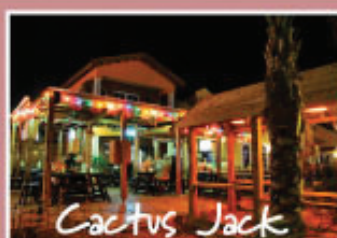


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Open from 5:00 pm - 11:00 pm  
7 days a week  
[www.tangoaruba.com](http://www.tangoaruba.com)



**Salt & Pepper**

**Salt & Pepper (at Arawak Garden, High Rise Hotels)**  
International Cuisine and Tapas  
Phone: 586-3280  
Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner.  
Daily Live music by local artists and bands on our large terrace.  
Open from 7:00 am - 01:00 am  
7 days a week  
[www.saltandpepperaruba.com](http://www.saltandpepperaruba.com)



**MooMba Beach**

**MooMba Beach (between Holiday Inn & Marriott Surf Club)**  
International Cuisine  
Phone: 586-5365  
Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner and Daily Live Music.  
Enjoy dinner by torch light... barefoot on the beach.  
Open from 7:00 am - 11:00 pm  
Bar open from 10:00 am - 01:00 am  
[www.moombabeach.com](http://www.moombabeach.com)



**Café the Plaza**

**Café the Plaza (at Renaissance Marketplace, Downtown)**  
International Cuisine  
Phone: 583-8826  
Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner and Daily Live music.  
A Dutch style restaurant with moderate prices  
Open from 10:00 am - 01:00 am  
7 days a week  
[www.cafetheplaza.com](http://www.cafetheplaza.com)



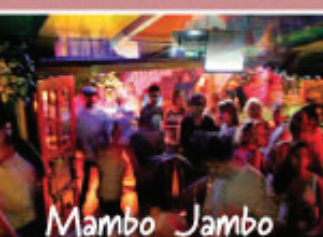
**Sopranos Piano Bar**

**Sopranos Piano Bar (at Arawak Garden, High Rise Hotels)**  
Bar with Live Entertainment  
Phone: 586-8622  
Extensive Cocktail menu.  
Daily live music, request your favorite songs and sing along!  
Open from 5:00 pm - 01:00 am  
7 days a week  
[www.sopranospianobar.com](http://www.sopranospianobar.com)



**Chino Latino**

**Chino Latino (at the Village across Radisson - Palm Beach)**  
Asian & Latin Cuisine  
"where food means fun"  
Phone: 586-6380  
Dinner and after dinner snacks  
DJ's - bands - dancing  
Restaurant & Bar open from 5:00 pm - 2:00 am  
7 days a week  
[www.chinolatinoaruba.com](http://www.chinolatinoaruba.com)



**Mambo Jambo**

**Mambo Jambo Latin Bar & Grill (Royal Plaza Downtown)**  
International & Latin Cuisine  
Phone: 583-3632  
Lunch, Dinner, Live Bands, Salsa Dancing, Great food and good music 7 days a week.  
Restaurant open from 11:00 am - 09:00 pm, Bar open from 11:00 am - 04:00 am  
[www.mambojamboaruba.com](http://www.mambojamboaruba.com)



**Hadicurari**

**Hadicurari Restaurant (between MooMba Beach and Marriott Surf Club)**  
International & Seafood Cuisine  
Phone: 586-2288  
Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner  
'Seafood with a view'  
Restaurant open from 8:00 am - 11:00 pm  
7 days a week  
[www.hadicurari.com](http://www.hadicurari.com)



[www.arubawineanddine.com](http://www.arubawineanddine.com)

